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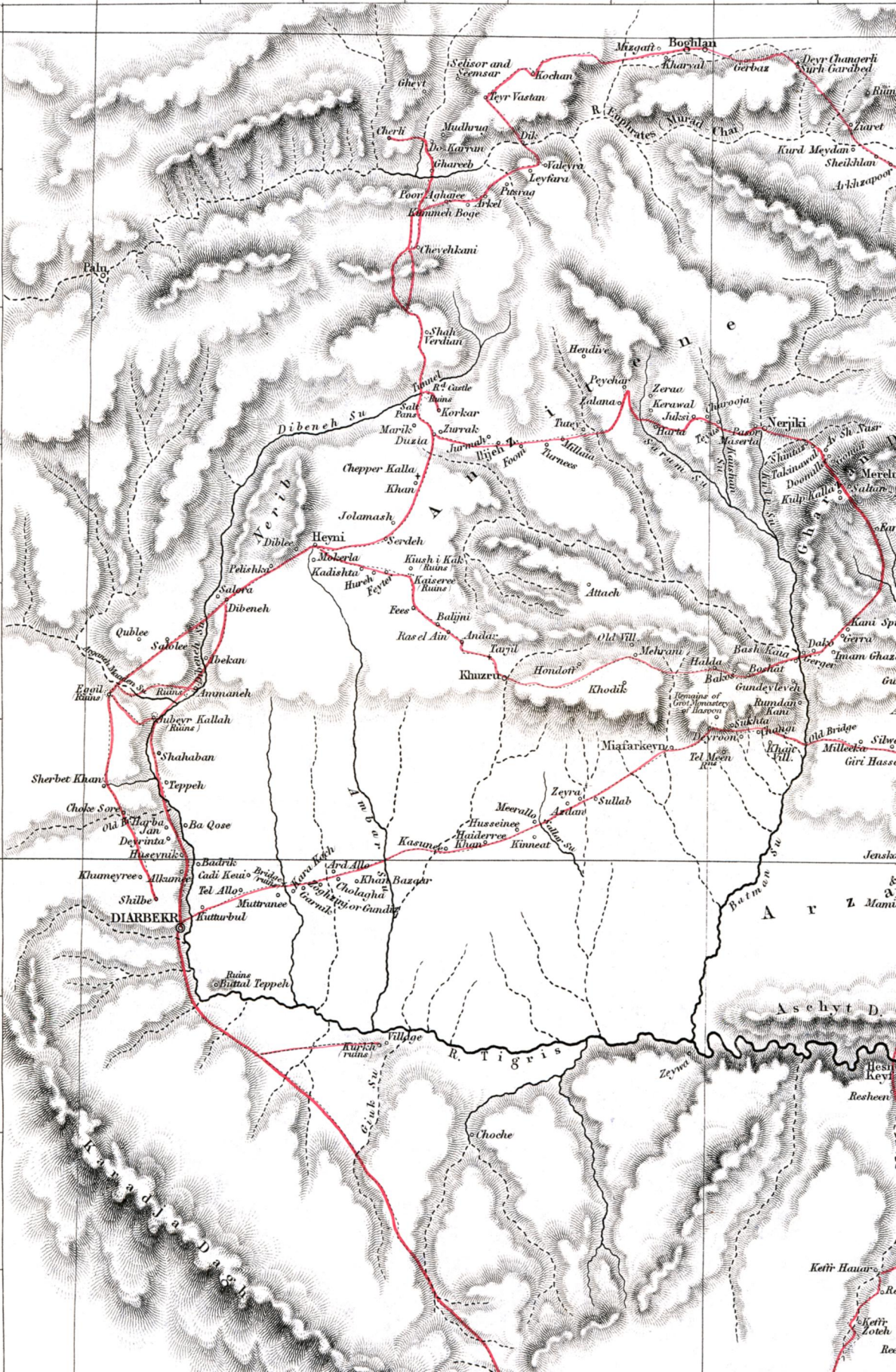
honesty of the African character, seem to have been displayed here to a greater degree than anywhere else during the journey, and eventually the Baron and his party were obliged to leave (after wasting a large amount of property in presents), without being able to effect the objects of the journey. The nearest they could get was about 15 miles from the summit, and an altitude of 4867 feet: but they made numerous observations, sufficient to enable Mr. Thornton to sketch a tolerably accurate map of the group of mountains. The top of Kilima-ndjaro, from this side, appeared as a broad dome with a rugged, blunt peak on its north-west side of nearly the same height as the summit and sloping away gently for a long distance; behind the eastern slope rose the very ragged peaked top of the east peak. The snow showed beautifully on all these summits. The principal top had a good thick, smooth, coating of snow, with patches and streaks lower down, lying in ravines. Mr. Thornton calculated the height to be 22,814 feet. The Jagga range of mountains on the southern slopes were covered with dense sombre forests; their line of summits is somewhat regular and defined, but cut through by many deep ravines and narrow valleys. The Madjame side of the cone was very steep, and Mr. Thornton saw three snow-slips or avalanches gliding down the slope and creating clouds of snow-dust; but he saw nothing like a glacier. The rocks observed on the lower hills were vesicular, semiporphyrific lavas and other lavas of a spongy nature, showing the volcanic nature of these elevations.

The party left Madjame by stealth in the dead of the night of the 4th September, to escape being plundered by the chief, and, after a long detour to the south, arrived at Mombas on the 10th of October.

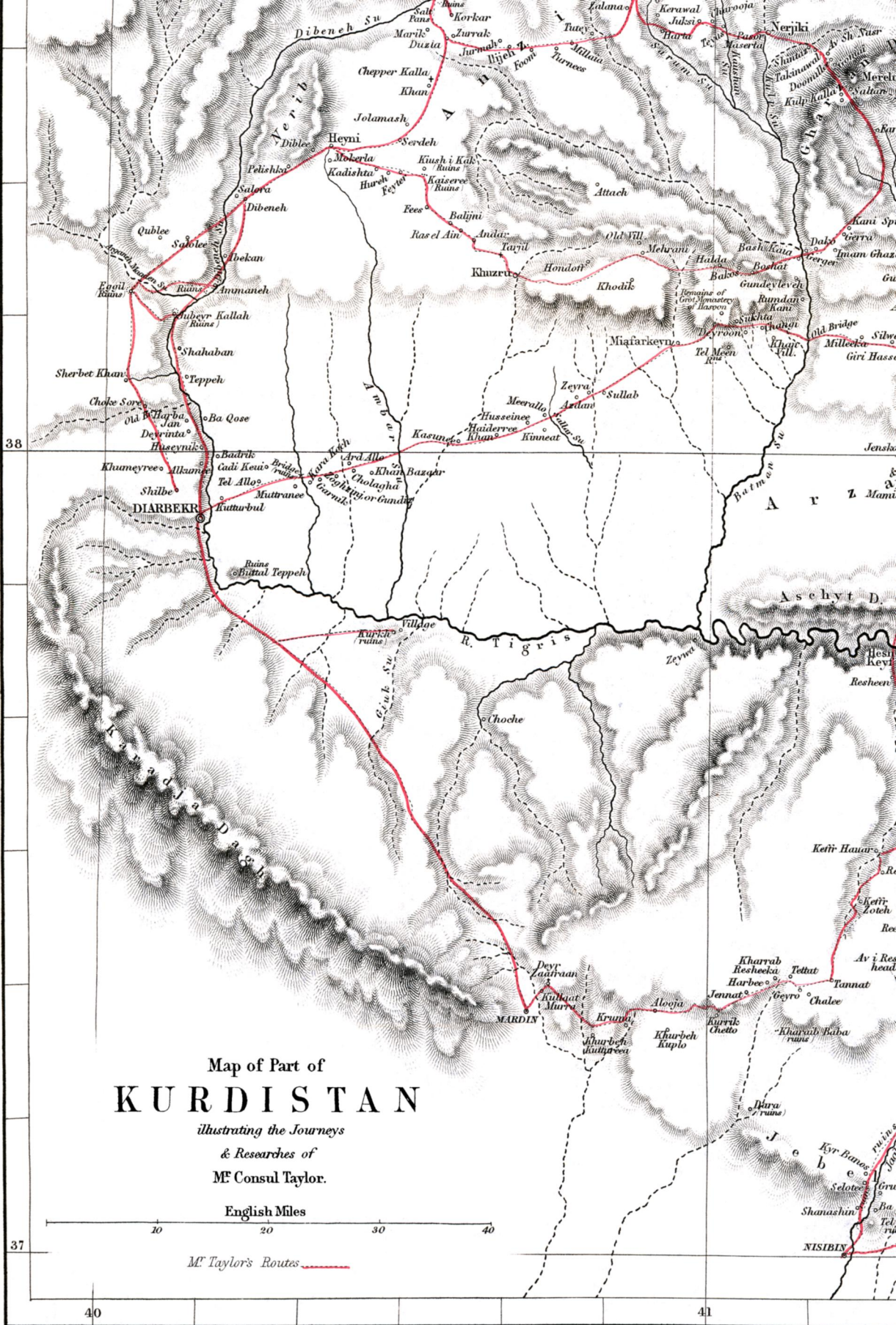
III.—*Travels in Kurdistan, with Notices of the Sources of the Eastern and Western Tigris, and Ancient Ruins in their Neighbourhood.* By J. G. TAYLOR, Esq., H.B.M.'s Consul at Diarbekr.

Read, Jan. 9, 1865.

THE information contained in the following paper is the result of three journeys which I made in 1861-63, with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, in the consular district of Diarbekr, the capital of the modern Pashalik of Kurdistan, and the seat of its Mushir or Governor-General. Originally undertaken for the purpose of obtaining reliable commercial and statistical data, I did not, nevertheless, neglect to note everything of geographical or historical interest, which either the reports of the natives or ancient authors had brought to my notice. Such information could not







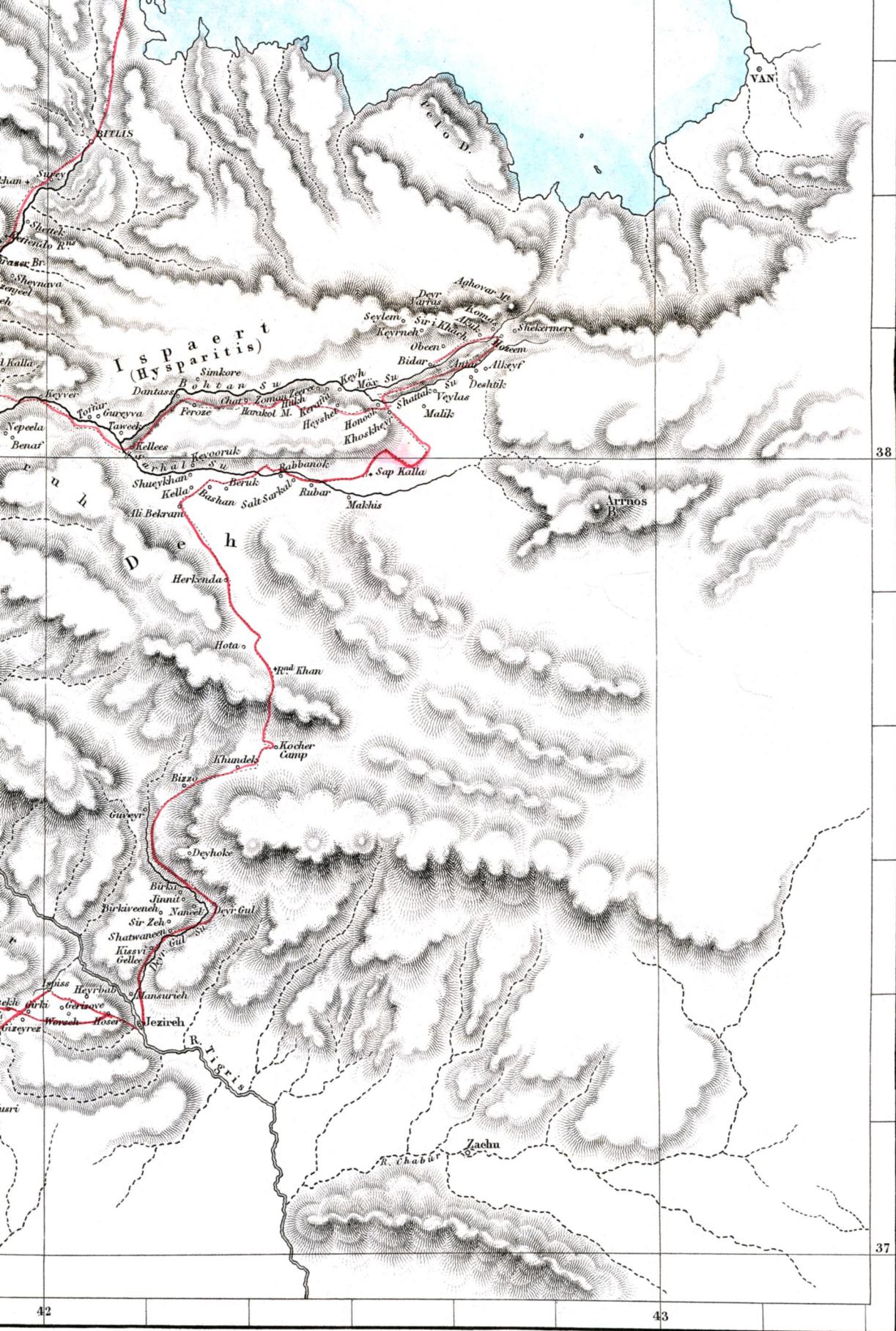
Map of Part of
KURDISTAN

*illustrating the Journeys
& Researches of
M^r Consul Taylor.*

English Miles

M^r Taylor's Routes ———





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fail to be novel and interesting, as although the country has often been visited by European travellers, they have, most unfortunately, though far more able than myself to illustrate what they saw, scarcely ever gone either to the right or to the left of the common highway, and therefore passed by without discovering many of the ancient ruins and sites described in the following memoir. Much of this interesting country—particularly the more mountainous part—remains still unexplored ; but I trust at some future time to be able to complete a work which, under the circumstances, is at present unavoidably defective.

The province of Kurdistan, as it now exists, contains a great portion of the fourth Armenia, the whole of Arzanene, Zabdicene and Gordyena or Cordouene, and Northern Mesopotamia. With the exception of the latter, the general features of this tract are high mountains, enclosing fertile valleys, and an undulating upland, bounded on the east by the Tigris, and intersected at several points by numerous streams, having their rise in the mountainous districts of the Pashalik, and emptying themselves into that river. The scenery in the highlands yields to no other portions of Turkey for variety and romantic beauty, while the banks of the numerous rivers and streams flow through charming landscapes and thickly wooded valleys, bathing in their course the bases of castles and towns famous in profane and ecclesiastical history.

Previous to commencing a general survey of the province, I visited the interesting ruins of Kurkh, about 14 miles from Diarbekr. These ruins, occupying one end of a large alluvial plain teeming with the richest cultivation, consist of a high mound and a cluster of lower heaps about its base, situated at the eastern end of an elevated platform—evidently the site of a large town—on the right bank of the Tigris, and close to the angle formed by the junction of the Giuk Su with the former, which receives also the waters of the Ambar Su, on the left bank opposite. The large mound is the relic of an old Parthian fort, composed of large blocks of neatly-cut basalt ; and, from the remains of mosaics and other ornamental vestiges found among the smaller mounds at its base, I fancy they formed portions of a palace that was connected with it. The fort is about a mile in circumference, and 60 to 80 feet high ; the greater height and also the best preserved portions of building being towards the south ; while on the northern and western sides it is lower, and the stonework there nearly all in ruins. At the north-west corner, near the summit of the mound, at a point where a bank of earth * had seemingly been thrown up outside the walls of the fort, I had the good fortune to discover a stone slab bearing

* In the Bible and Assyrian inscriptions, there is frequent mention made of similar banks of earth having been thrown up by the besieging forces as a means of facilitating the capture of a city.

the effigy of an Assyrian king, and covered on both sides with long inscriptions in the cuneiform character, to within $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet of its base, which had purposely been left bare to admit of its being sunk erect in the ground, as a trophy commemorative of its capture by the king, and at the point probably where his legions effected their forced entry into the city. Some little way below it, on the slope of the mound, and nearly entirely concealed by *débris*, I exhumed another perfect relic of the same description. The head had been somewhat damaged by the attempts of some ignorant Moslem fanatics to sever it from the body, as they regard all statues and pictures of living things to be direct acts of gross impiety against the Deity, whose creative attribute has been sinfully assumed by the Kaffirs of a former age.

Sir H. Rawlinson identifies the site of Kurkh with that of Tooskan, alluded to in the inscription on the Great Monolith, exhumed by Mr. Layard, and described by him in the sixteenth chapter of his '*Nimroud and Babylon*,' where distinct reference is made to these two tablets commemorative of the Assyrian King's campaigns and successes. He also, I believe, considers that it occupies the position of the old Parthian city of Carcathiocerta. About 6 miles from Kurkh, also on the right bank of the Tigris, is a curious ruin, called Poornag, or Poordad; and 6 miles higher up, on the left bank, in the centre of the highly cultivated valley of the Tigris, which begins close to Diarbekr, and stretches down to Kurkh, the ruins called Buttal Teppeh, consisting of a low mound with a high conical peak at its western end, similar in shape to, but smaller than the one at Nimroud. From all these ruins, and particularly after rains, numerous copper coins, principally Roman and Byzantine, are procured. I myself obtained two fine first bronzes of Trajan, with different and rare reverses from Kurkh, some Parthian coins, and an antique gold ear-ring, all in very good preservation.

In October, 1861, I made a short journey from Diarbekr to Saert, by Miafarkeyn, Arzen, and Zok; and from thence, following the course of the Bohtan Su, or Centritis, to Til, where it joins the Tigris, whose course I followed close up to Redhwan, on the Arzen Su. Crossing this latter river, I proceeded to Hesn Keyf, on the Tigris, and then, *viâ* Mediat and Mardin, back to Diarbekr. My route in the first instance led me along the foot of the hills bounding the great undulating plain north of Diarbekr, that stretches up to the Gharzan district to the north-east, and which is washed on the south side by the Tigris. The first point of interest was the old town of Miafarkeyn or Farkeyn, as it is more generally called by the natives. It is situated in the midst of gardens, at the foot of the hills, about 36 miles from Diarbekr. Two small streams of little depth, that have their rise

in copious springs close to the town walls, wash them on either side, and irrigate the rice-grounds and plantations. The town, wretched and miserable itself, is surrounded by a fine stone wall, and contains numerous relics of antiquity, but none of them seemingly older than the early Christian period.

It is, however, undoubtedly of far more ancient date, and the numerous isolated heaps and long low mounds probably cover ruins, much older than any at present visible above ground. The Armenian geographers (who also call it Noupargerd and Mouphergin) place it on the Nymphæus; but Procopius,* with greater exactitude, says that the Nymphæus, the present Batman Su, runs close to it. According to a tradition still current among the natives, it was founded by Noupfar, a sister of Tigranes, the Haikian. Without attaching any weight to an idle tradition of an ignorant people, the fact of the existence of such a tradition is important, as determining the greater antiquity of the site. There is no doubt that a large, though a dilapidated town still existed here at the beginning of the fifth century, when it was restored by St. Marutha, an early bishop of the see, the ambassador of the younger Theodosius to Jezdegerd, the Persian King.† From the centre of the vile hovels that compose the modern town rise the stately ruins built by Marutha, where he transported and interred the relics of the martyrs who had suffered under Shapoor.‡

The building is solid, lofty, capacious, and (like the large church of St. James, at Nisibin) highly ornamented,—the capitals of the columns by a kind of basket-work of peculiar elegance, cut out of the solid blocks that compose them, and the interior by a broad belt, representing clusters of grapes and foliage. In one of the arched passages leading from the northern gate to the town is a long, though defaced, inscription in the character of the lower empire, and some isolated memorials of the same nature are met with outside, on the town walls. Miarfarkeyn, Maepracta, or Martyropolis, is situated in that portion of the fourth Armenia, called Sophene, Tzophanene, and Sophosene, and has by some geographers been identified as occupying the site of the ancient Carcathiocerta. Procopius alludes to it as the capital of the Sophosenes, and also mentions it under the name of Justinianopolis, after the Emperor who wrested it from Hormiodas, son of Chosroes, A.D. 589, and subsequently fortified the place.§ Alternately held

* 'De Bel. Persic.,' lib. i. cap. 21.

† 'Assem.,' vol. i. pp. 174-178; St. Martin ('Vies des Saints en Armen.'), vol. i. p. 96.

‡ St. Marutha was a grandson of Oda, a pagan high-priest of Mesopotamia. He obtained from Jezdegerd the alleviation of the Christian persecution, and persuaded him to make an alliance with Theodosius the Younger. (Tchamitch.)

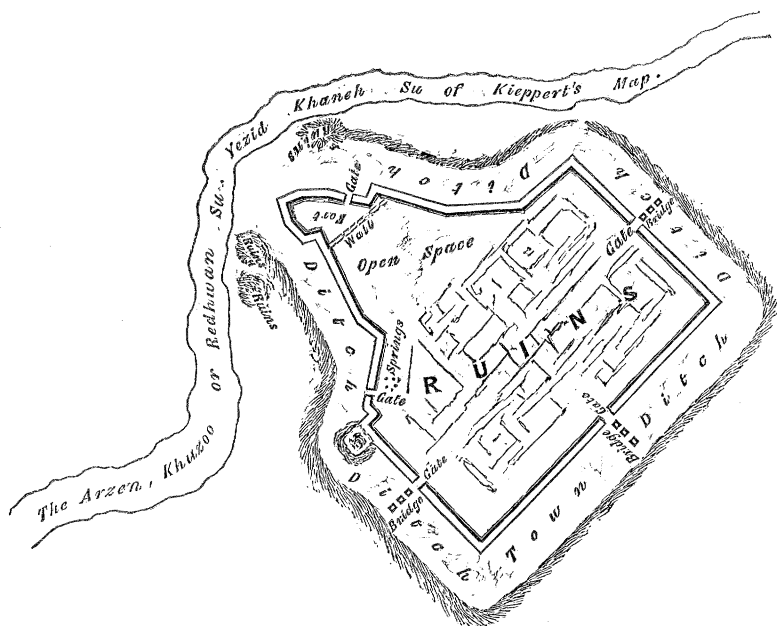
§ 'Procop. De Ædif.,' lib. iii. cap. 2.

by Romans and Persians, it reverted, during the califate of Omar, to the Arabs. One of his generals, Iyadh ebn Ghanem, captured the town by stratagem, although the Moslems delight in narrating that it came into their hands by supernatural means.* Subsequent to the Moslem domination, it was in the possession alternately of the Hamdanides, Kurdish Merwanides, Seljooks, Ortokides, and Eioobites, and it remained in the possession of the latter till conquered by Tamerlane from the reigning prince of the period. The Eioobites, under Modhuffer ed' Deen Ghazi, nephew of the great Sellah ed' Deen or Saladin, and the Melik el Auhed Nejm ed' Deen Eioob, did much to embellish and fortify the town. The former built a splendid mosque, bearing on the mihrab the date A.H. 624, the remains of which, with its beautifully carved windows and aisles, still exist; and the latter, according to the inscriptions still legible upon them, rebuilt the walls, and constructed a lofty watch-tower outside the town.

Close to Miafarkeyn, in a steep mountain-gorge, are the remains of the grot monastery of Hasoon, a corruption for Hoseea. The grots are dug out of a steep and nearly inaccessible rock, that in consequence looks at a distance more like a rabbit-burrow than the former abode of men. Near them is an old church, which, according to an inscription inside it, was repaired A.D. 861. The caves are now inhabited by a lawless band of Kurds, the scourge of the neighbourhood; and in my rambles through them, I saw many vestiges of the results of their predatory excursions. In the plain opposite is a high conical mound, evidently artificial, called Tel Meen, commanding a fine view of the country about, with the Batman Su in the distance. On the top of it is a large Christian village, whose inhabitants informed me they often picked up copper and silver medals on it and in its vicinity. One of the latter, bearing on one side the effigies of Marc Anthony and his son, in very fine preservation, I purchased from among a handful of other coins that were offered me for sale. From here I reached the Batman Su or Nymphæus (in the time of Procopius the boundary between the Roman and Persian territories) in two hours, and crossed it by a fine bridge of a single arch 40 feet high. It consists properly of this one large pointed arch and two smaller arches, but the latter were dry; and the stream, which here is easily fordable, and at this season not 3 feet deep, flowed through the grand arch only. From the remains of an inscription on its eastern face, it was built A.D. 643 by a certain Othman: with the exception of the date, no other part of the record was legible. The Batman Su rises in the mountains about 40 miles north of this, and consists of the united waters of the Kulp,

* El Wakidi, فتوح ديار ربيع وديار بكر.

Kaushan, and Sarum Sus, besides a host of smaller unimportant streams. Four hours and a half from this I crossed the Huzu Arzen, or Redhwan Su—it is called by all these names—into the present district of Gharzan. The province in which it is situated was called Arzanene by the Romans, and Artzn (Moses of Chorene), Aghdsnik, Aghdsen, and Khordsen by Armenian writers, and Arzen by the Arabs, since corrupted into its present name of Gharzan by the Kurds and Turks. It was one of the provinces taken by the Parthians from the Armenians, and was ceded A.D. 298 with Intilene, Zabdicene, Moxoene, and Cordouene, by Narses King of Persia to the Romans, under Galerius, in the time of Diocletian.*



No. 1. Plan of the Ruins of Arzen (Emporium Arzanenorum).
(On a scale of 800 paces to one inch.)

The ford was near the flourishing village of Giri Hassan, close to the ruins of Arzen,† the Oppidum Arzanenorum of Procopius,

* Gibbon, Bohn's Ed., vol. i. p. 448.

† The city of Arzen at the time of the Arab conquest was the property of the Armenian lord of Bitlis (El Wakidy Futtooh Dia Rebia wa Diar Bekr), and was ceded by him to Iyadh Ebn Ghanem, Omer's general (ibid.). It subsequently fell, on the decline of the Abbasides, into the hands of the Kurd Merwánides, from whom it passed to a local family. Abul Feda (vol. iv. p. 366) says, "El Melik el Mudhuffer Ghazi, son of El Adel (brother of Saladin), took Arzen of Diarbekr from its lord, Hissam ed Deen, of the ancient family of El Ahdeb, who had

situated on the left bank of the river. The ruins are very extensive; the remains of the old walls, 20 feet thick at the base, and tapering up to 8 feet, constructed of irregular pieces of rough stone, cemented with mortar, that surround the town are easily traced; and the defences towards the river, consisting of thicker walls and a number of small-domed buildings, are in still better preservation. The area contained within them is about 2700 square yards. On the north-eastern and southern sides the walls are straight and regular, but towards the west it narrows off into an irregular shape that follows the course of the stream. It has four gates, one in each of the three regular walls, and a fourth leading to the river. At the southern side is a mound of ruin connected with the wall, that seems to have been a large fortified bastion. The whole ruin is surrounded by a deep ditch, which was crossed at three of the gates by as many bridges, whose foundations still appear above ground. When I visited it, the area included within the walls was bearing a fine crop of wheat, but the regular lines of the streets, and some of the sites of the larger buildings, could still be traced. So many medals in gold and silver are found here that the fellahs who till the ground are paid nothing by the owner for their labour, and they give him in addition half of everything they may find. The town was built on what appears a natural platform of some little elevation, which, at its western end, has a steep sharp fall into the plain about a mile from the walls, where it is bounded by a deep bed, through which a small marshy stream flows towards the Tigris, close under the Yezid village of Tellebeea, or Tileeba. Independently of other associations, Arzen is interesting as being connected with the earliest Christian history, it having been visited, according to Abul Furraj, the Syrian historian, by Mar Addæus, or Thaddeus, one of the Seventy, the apostle of the Syrian Chaldæans (and the same who cured Abgarus Uchama of his leprosy), in the thirtieth year of Our Saviour's Ascension, and the fifteenth of Tiberius Cæsar, who then built a church here, which was afterwards called by his name. Higher up the river, and on the same side as Arzen, are the remains of another large city, where I found some of the earliest records of the Moslem conquest, in the shape of tombstones, bearing Cufic inscriptions in the character peculiar to the first century of their era. Many of them are now used by the Armenians of Kani Masee, a small village situated at one end of the ruins, as gravestones. As neither they nor the Moslems knew anything of the characters on them, I thought it best to leave them in their ignorance, as without doubt the latter would soon

possessed it from Melik Shah's time, and gave him Heyni in exchange, A. H. 627." El Mudhuffer was at that time lord of Miafarkeyn.

have desecrated every grave in the place did they know that on each stone the formula of their faith, together with a verse from the Koran, were engraved. Opposite the ruins, on the right bank of the Arzen Su, which was formerly spanned at this part by a fine stone bridge, whose foundations peer above the stream, is the fine old ruin known now by the names of Kalla Sheikh Baj and Kalla Anushirvan. It is situated on a high hill of conglomerate, the usual rock formation here, having at its summit a circumference of $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile. The remains are evidently Parthian, and consist of walls of common limestone, 14 feet thick, which in some places is composed of brickwork of thin broad tiles of the same solidity. A couple of families of decayed Gharzan Begs inhabited some miserable huts among the ruins, and they had cleared several of the old houses, which served them for a stable. These were all of course now under ground, the *débris* of centuries having accumulated over and covered them. They were built in arches in a very substantial manner, and seemed at one time to have occupied the whole surface, as, in several pits that had been dug in different places, the portions of many other similar buildings were also discernible. On all sides but one the mound is nothing but a steep high cliff, commanding a fine uninterrupted view for many miles all round; but towards the west a winding and difficult path conducts the traveller to a large gateway still intact, and the only one in the ruin. A few greybeards of the place, who pretended to some traditional knowledge, informed me that the castle, during the times of ignorance—that is, before Islamism—belonged to the Beni Sassan; and stated that the Gharzan Begs, who live at Zok, 4 miles off, were the descendants of that dynasty in these parts; a fact that was corroborated to me by the Begs themselves on a subsequent visit I paid them. Near this is the mountainous district of Sassoon, inhabited by a warlike, unruly set of Kurds, called Baliki; they are neither Moslems, Christians, nor real Kizzilbash. They swear by a church, and never by a mosque, or the Deity, or any of the prophets.

After a great deal of intercourse with them in different places, I could not make more of their belief than what is expressed in the formula of faith which their headmen repeated to me in Turkish, word for word, thus:—"Bin yakhadan bash gusterdi choklari saaldi gumana Bir yakhadan bash gusterseyide chokler gelerdi imaneh;" which translated is, "A thousand ways he showed himself, but many remained in doubt: if he should show himself in one way, a great many would come to the faith." And they explained it by saying, that all the prophets mentioned in the Torat, Enjeel, and Koran, were nothing more than one and the same person, who had appeared at different epochs in different forms. They thus ascribe divinity to all, though they forbear to

mention one name more reverently than the other. But, as they consider that the last shape he assumed was that of Ali, they attach more sanctity to his name than to Moses or Christ, while Mahomed they ignore entirely.

In this respect they are not unlike the Ali Illahees of Persia, and Kizzilbashs of other parts of Kurdistan, who seem to regard Ali as the personified deity, and holding, therefore, a much higher position than the Prophet of Islam. In the mountains near Kharpüt the American missionaries, with the praiseworthy zeal and perseverance under every trial, hardship, and persecution, that characterises them, have succeeded in imbuing them with a wish to study the Holy Scriptures; and, from their frequent request for native pastors to reside among and instruct them, it is probable that they are at last awakened to a sense of their errors and superstitions, and are anxious to forsake them for the Gospel truths. The wonderful influence exercised over them by the missionaries is exemplified from the mere fact that they, a mere handful of men from the New World, have been enabled to effect that which all previous dynasties and the present Turkish one, aided by its troops, have failed to do; for they have persuaded some of the most unruly and turbulent to lay down their arms, and abstain from rebellion, robbery, and murder, as being totally inconsistent with their teaching and the Holy Writ. But not only here, but throughout Turkey, wherever Protestantism, under American auspices, has been introduced, I have invariably found those professing that faith, in spite of their previous character and condition, to be the most loyal, peaceable, and industrious subjects the Sultan possesses.

The Baliki are the descendants of the early inhabitants of the mountains, who, according to them, had for their ancestors Sharezer, or Sanaser, as they call him, son of Sennacherib, who, with his brother Adrimalek, fled to this place after having murdered their father at Nineveh, and founded three dynasties, one of which was the Sanasouns, or Sassouns. The name of this district appears in several authors as that of Sanasounik, or Sasounk, corrupted subsequently into Sassoon. With reference to this region, the oldest Armenian author, Moses of Chorene, says that Sgaïorte, father of Barouir, the first Armenian king, and contemporary of Sardana-palus,* established Sanaser in the south-west of Armenia, near the confines of Assyria. His descendants peopled the mountain called Sim (Mount Saius†), and their chief obtained the government of

* 'Mos. Ch.,' vol. i. p. 95, translated by Florival.

† Dionysius, in his *Chronicles*, when talking of the irruption of the Huns into Syria (A.G. 706 = A.D. 395), says they destroyed all Syrian regions which lie at the foot of Mount Saius, as Arzen Maephrecta, &c. It was also called the Mons Aridus. The Syrians called it the Tura Zahoio, meaning the "Arid Mount." It

the principality. From them descended the Ardznouni; and Kenouni-Charachan, of the same house of Sanaser, was at a later date created Grand Prince and Governor of the same country, receiving with it the canton of Artzen (Arzan) from Vagharchag (Valarsaces), brother of Arsaces, king of Armenia.* The inhabitants of Sassoon are, Moosee, Sarmee, Sassoon, and Baliki Kurds and Armenians, the latter being under subjection to the former. But the industry and trade of that part is entirely in the hands of the Armenians, who stand, with respect to the Kurds, in the position of serfs. Individual members of families, or a whole family, purchases the exclusive right of trading with particular towns from the chief, in return for a stipulated share of the profits, for which his family and goods are answerable. Thus, one man only can trade with Baghdad and in its produce; another with Constantinople and in its goods, and so on with every town throughout the Turkish empire; the same rule applying to all articles of export as well as import. Should an unauthorised interloper introduce himself for the purposes of trade into their country, he is either summarily despatched, or plundered of everything he possesses.

From Arzen a smart ride of 30 miles took me to Saert, during which I crossed the Bitlis Su at the 23rd mile, and the Kezzer, Keyzer or Sherivan Su (which falls into the Bitlis Su) at the 27th mile. Saert and Asaerd, the Mobadra of the Syrians,† although in itself a mean and wretched Kurdish town, is interesting from having been identified by D'Anville and Kinneir as the ancient Tigranocerta. It is situated at one end of a small plain on the slope of some high land separating it from the Bohtan Su or Eastern Tigris, from which it is 2 miles distant at the nearest part. The plain is considerably higher than the bed of the river, the descent to it being over a very steep road, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile long. A modern writer (Mr. Ainsworth), in combating the idea of Saert being Tigranocerta, adduces in proof that there are no ruins near it. There are certainly none visible above ground, but he probably was unaware that the whole of the town has been constructed from the remains of old buildings that have been exhumed from a depth of many feet below the soil. These ancient remains are always found when digging deep foundations for new buildings in the plain, but never on the slope of the hill upon which a portion

is a part of Mount Masuis, which at different localities was known by different names. Also in the history of Armenia, by Vartabad Arisd. de Lasdiverd (translated by M. Prud'homme), they are called the inhabitants of Mount Sim, ordinarily called Sannaçounk, from the name of their ancestor. ('Revue de l'Orient,' tom. xvii. p. 8.)

* 'Mos. Ch.,' vol. i. p. 103; vol. ii. p. 145. Geog. of the Vartabed Vartan, in St. Martin, vol. ii. p. 431.

† 'Asseman,' vol. ii. p. 382.

of the modern town is built; and they extend for a distance of at least 3 miles, to a spot where some of them are nearer the surface, but which the natives say are the ruins of another and distinct town, called Arzoon. It is worthy of remark that in no other part of the Pashalik have I ever been able to find any coins of Tigranes, whereas here I bought in one day five of his medals, one of them bearing on its reverse a laureated Roman head; while other coins, Roman, Sassanian, Byzantine, and Cufic, are invariably met with in the excavations, as also a few cameos and finely-executed intaglios.

I would not have it inferred, from what has gone before, that Saert does actually represent the site of Tigranocerta, as both Tacitus and Strabo place it somewhere near the vicinity of Nisibin. The former says it is on the Nicephorius, 36 miles from Nisibin; and the latter places it south of Mount Masius, in the neighbourhood of that town,* and in the country of the Mygdonians.† These statements, if the general veracity of those authors is considered, are totally irreconcilable with the present position of Saert, or any place near it. Nor does the description of Tigranocerta, as we have it in Plutarch's account of Lucullus's campaign, coincide in the least with Saert; while the banks of the river are so rugged and steep that at present there is only one road leading to it, which a small number of men could easily defend against hostile thousands seeking to reach the plain from the river, even if composed of the tried legionaries of Lucullus. In the precincts of the modern town is a place known by the name of the Turrub-el-Yahood, or Jews' tombs. This fact is sufficiently curious as indicating the presence of a large Jewish colony here at some remote period, for at present there are no Jews in Saert, and none have resided here for ages.‡ At the point called Arzoon by the natives, 3 miles, as before stated, from Saert, is an old convent dedicated to Mar Yacoob el Habees—James the Hermit, the Ascetic of Endieli, near Amid—to whom (according to Procopius) the Persian monarch Cavades, or Cobad, granted a letter of protection, not only for himself, but also for all who chose to seek an asylum with him, when he was besieging Diarbekr.§ The Chaldæans say he is buried in the crypt of the convent, and point out two other places near it as containing the bodies of his two immediate disciples.

From Saert, pursuing the banks of the Bohtan Su, and passing

* 'Strabo,' lib. xi.

† Ibid., lib. xvi.

‡ Moses of Chorene tells us that Hyrcanus, high-priest and King of the Jews, was seized by Parzapan, the Armenian general, who sent him with many other Jewish captives to Tigranes, who ordered them to be sent to the town of Semiramis, the modern Van. Saert is on the direct road to it, 5 days off ('Moses of Chorene,' vol. i. pp. 191-193.)

§ 'De Bel. Pers.,' lib. i. cap. 7.

the junction of the Bitlis Su and the Bohtan Su, about 10 miles below Saert, close to the village of Ba Til, I proceeded to Til, where it joins the Tigris. This village, situated upon a mound, in the angle formed by the junction of the two rivers, is built of the stone procured from some old massive buildings in the centre of the tumulus, portions of which are seen protruding from the ground all round its base, and for some way up the slope. I believe Mr. Ainsworth to be in error when he identifies (in his 'Researches') this village as the one of the same name where Tigranes transported the statue of Minerva.* The Til alluded to by Moses of Chorene was in the district of Egueghiatz, now Erzingan) in the province of Bardzer Haik,† which answers to the modern Tillo, on the north-west side of the large Mush plain.‡

Following the left bank of the Tigris upwards, a ride of four hours, during which I passed the point where the Arzen Su falls into the former, brought me to Redhwan, on the left bank of the latter river. The population of Redhwan, and the plain in which it is situated, although still extensively peopled by the Yezidees, was about twenty years ago nearly exclusively confined to people of that sect, who were always in a state of semi-rebellion against the government; but since the death of their chief, Meer Zig (a corruption of Meer Eshag), who was killed by the Turks, the country became more directly under their control, and they have consequently comparatively abandoned the place for Sinjar and the neighbourhood of Mosul. Crossing the river here I ascended the high hills beyond, and descended by a steep miserable goat-path, only practicable for mules, and which occupied one hour and a half in the descent, into the valley of the Tigris; and then, fording that river, reached the old grot town of Hesn el Kahef, or Hesn Keyf, in three hours and a half from Redhwan. The modern town is perched on the top of a steep and nearly inaccessible rock, having at the eastern end the old castle built by the Ortokides§ on the ruins of a more ancient edifice. In a small plain at the foot of the mountains, that here press down upon the Tigris, are the ruins of the old town of the same name, the seat of the Orto-

* 'Moses of Chorene,' vol. i. p. 181.

† 'Mos. Ch.,' vol. i. p. 379.

‡ Notes to Matthew of Edessa 'Dulauriers Trans.,' p. 400.

§ The large room of the castle, now full of lumber, is built at the extreme end of this point, where the rock falls perpendicularly down to the bank of the river, the foundation-stones being let into the native stone. A single large window looks out over the old town in the plain, 800 feet below it, the grot habitations on either side, and the valley of the Tigris backed by the Redhwan range of hills

The castle was called the Josek (جوسك), a corruption for Kiushk, and was the favourite residence of Qutb ed'deen Suqman, the Ortokide Lord of Amid and Hesn Keyf. Abul Feda relates that he fell out of the window of the room described above, and was dashed to pieces in the plain below, A. H. 597 (Abu Feda 'Annals,' vol. iv. p. 192).

kides and of the Eioobites, with the remains of some fine old mosques and the burial-places of the later Eioobites, surrounded by neat walls of cut stone. A noble bridge of three large and three smaller pointed arches (similar in material to the one over the Batman Su), but now in ruins, spanned the river close under the town. Near the water's-edge, on two of the buttresses, which appear much older than the superstructure, are some reliefs representing male figures, of Parthian workmanship, about 3 feet high, and in good relief, but unfortunately, owing to fluvial action, much defaced. From the courtyard of the old castle, at the eastern end of the modern town, a curious covered way, containing a winding stair of 200 steps, is scooped out of the solid rock, leading down to the river. A little farther on are the remains of a similar stair, which, like the former, were evidently used by the townspeople to supply themselves with water from the Tigris. Where the stairs are at all exposed to the attack of an enemy from the opposite side, they are pitted with innumerable small holes, probably caused by flights of arrows that had been shot against these exposed parts, to prevent any communication with the river. Some 40 feet up the rock (west of the stair) is a large cave, with a lofty arched entrance, having on the right hand a mutilated figure, considerably larger than life, with outstretched arms, cut in high relief upon the stone. I had considerable difficulty in getting access to the cave, called Es' Sellamlik by the natives, but was not rewarded by anything I saw in the interior, although I had been informed an inscription was to be seen there. But by far the most interesting relics of the place are the myriads of grots, that stretch for 3 miles in one direction, and occupy the sides of six other separate ravines, scooped out of the hills to the east of and round the town. They exist, tier above tier, in parallel lines all up to the top, communicating with each other by stairs and by a zigzag narrow path, that, passing the door of each cell, reaches from the highest cave to the plain. In the same manner the water of some fine copious springs on the top of the hill was conducted by a narrow channel past each of them, and within easy reach of their inhabitants. With very few exceptions a monastic simplicity characterises them all; and, although some few had a large opening at one side, shaped like the common modern Aiwan, the majority had only a single opening (for entrance and egress) towards the plain and river. Each grot contained generally three deep recesses for couches, and two or three small niches for the reception of articles of every-day use. I was not lucky enough (notwithstanding the minute search I made in nearly all the caves on both sides of the river and in the different ravines) to discover any inscriptions or relics of importance, although Parthian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Cufic coins were daily offered me in profusion.

Hesn Keyf or Hesn el Kahef is mentioned in Procopius as Ciphas,* and by the early Syrian writers as Keppa and Hesnet Keppa, all meaning the rock castle. Arab traditions say it was once called Sabbat Aghwal, or "The Seven Ravines," from the fact of the grotts being dug out of the sides of seven different narrow ravines, which converge towards one common centre; and an early Arab author says it was called Hesn Loghur,† but that, at the time of its capture, it went by the name of its owner, Talun ebn Keifa.

An Armenian author, in his history relative to the first crusade, mentions Hesn Keyf under the name Harsenkev,‡ and says that after the defeat of Baldwin de Bourg, Count of Edessa, and Jocelyn de Courtnay, by Djekermish and Soukman, which resulted in the capture of those two chiefs, Soukman ebn Artuq sent Jocelyn a prisoner to Hesn Keyf, while Baldwin was at the same time incarcerated at Mosul by Djekermish, the lord of that town.§ After being set at liberty in return for a considerable ransom, Jocelyn and his kinsman, Waleran (or William), were again captured by Noor ed' Douleh Balac, son of Behram, son of Artuq; and Baldwin, who with his nephew had flown to their rescue, was also defeated by the same chief, and shared their prison at Kharput.|| Five months later a valiant band of Armenians of Behesni captured Kharput by a *coup de main*, and set the prisoners at liberty. Fearing that they would be unable to make good their retreat to their own territory through the enemy's country, they all remained in the castle but Jocelyn, who hastened away to bring a force sufficient effectually to release his friends and the numerous Christian captives—men and women—confined in the dungeons.¶ In the mean time Balac, having been apprised of the disaster, returned to Kharput, retook the castle by storm, and (with the exception of the royal captives, viz., Baldwin, his nephew, and Waleran) destroyed all his prisoners, consisting of 65 men and 80 "beautiful ladies," by throwing them over the battlements

* 'Procop. De Bell. Pers.,' lib. ii.

† El Wakidi in his *فتوح ديار ربيع وديار بكر*.

‡ Injizian in his 'Geog.,' p. 234, says it was known to the ancient Armenians under the name of Kentzy.

§ 'Matthew of Eretz,' by Chahan de Cirbied, p. 48. 'Matthew of Edessa,' ch. clxxxii. pp. 254, 255.

|| On this occasion the Moslems sewed up Jocelyn in a raw camel's hide, which, when it dried upon him, contracted to an extent as to leave him helpless, and so effectually prevented him making any use of his limbs (Ibn Athir, vol. x. p. 419). 'Matthew of Edessa,' chap. cxxxiv.-v. 'Abul Feda,' vol. iii. p. 412. Kharput is called by the early Arab writers "Khurt Burt," which evidently means that it was built by the Parthians, the modern name is a corruption of the older one.

¶ Abul Feda says the chief defeated by Djekermish and Soukman was Sanjil (Raymond of Thoulouse, Count of St. Gilles), who was taken prisoner and sent to Mosul, A. D. 1103, vol. iii. p. 349, 'Annals.'

into the plain below.* Subsequently the Count Waleran, whom Ibn Athir describes as one of the infidel rebels (ن شباطى الكفار), and Baldwin's nephew, were put to death by Timour Tash, son of Ilghazi, nephew of Balak; and Baldwin was ransomed a second time by Jocelyn for 100,000 tahegans.†

Hesn Keyf is venerated by Moslems as being the burial-place of Yokinna, the renegade Aleppine, who in the first century of the Hejireh apostatised from his faith, and played subsequently an active part in the Moslem ranks against the Christians. He fell at the siege of this place; and the miserable ruins that cover his remains are yearly visited by the devout, who regard him as a martyr and a hero. A ride of two hours over a rugged mountain-road, first ascending and then descending, brought me into the Keffr Joze plain, with its fine cotton-fields and villages, and another hour and a half to the village itself. About 3 miles south-west of it is the artificial mound of Tel Biat. It is of some extent, and formed of the *débris* and remains of former buildings, which, I was told at Keffr Joze, yielded numerous medals and intaglios. This is the first portion of Jebel Tur, the Tur Abadeen of the Syrians, which, bounded on the west and south-west by Mesopotamia, and on the north-east and east by the Tigris, terminates at Jezireh on the right bank of the Tigris. Passing through the extensive ruins of the old town of Zaz, famous formerly for its monastery of the Holy Cross, and by Haa, I reached Deyrindib. The rock which rises steep at the back of the village is crowned by the ruins of an old castle—from the remnants about, and size of the blocks of stone that composed it, it does not seem of very ancient date. It had, however, evidently been built to make a good defence and stand long sieges, and the courtyard was honeycombed with cisterns that had been dug out of the native rock for receiving water. I reached Mediat (Modiad and Mediath of the Syrians) in two hours after leaving Deyrendib. The present town is a collection of miserable hovels, built of rough stone, and inhabited exclusively, with the exception of course of the Turkish officials, by Christians of the Jacobite persuasion. About ten minutes' walk from the town, a building containing a convent and medresseh, contrasts greatly, by its solidity and some pretensions to comfort and elegance, with the hovels tenanted by its supporters. The convent is dedicated to Abraham and Habel, and is built over a much older structure, bearing date—as the natives pretend, there being no record to commemorate the fact—A.D. 218; the same era nearly as the neighbouring convent of Deir

* 'Matthew of Edessa,' chap. cccxxvi. pp. 303-10; 'Abul Feda Annals, vol. iii. p. 420, A.H. 517 = A.D. 1123.

† Ibid., vol. cexli. pp. 312, 313.

Amr, dedicated to Michael and Gabriel, so ruthlessly sacked by Tamerlane. The Mediat convent formerly possessed a fine MS. library of Syrian authors and divines; but Bedr Khan Beg, in one of his numerous raids against the Christians of Jebbel Tur, plundered the place, and the monks still regret the loss of their literary treasures on that occasion. From Mediat, following the usual caravan route by Mardin, I returned to Diarbekr.

In the autumn of 1862 and 1863 I was again in the saddle, prosecuting the researches commenced the previous year.

The first point of interest visited was Eggil, eight hours from Diarbekr. It is built on a high, steep, rocky mountain, on the right bank of the Arganeh Maaden branch of the Tigris.* At its eastern end are the remains of a fine old castle with a double wall, communicating (as at Hesn Keyf) by a covered stair of 177 steps (cut out of the rock) with the Tigris. At the western end, the mass on which the Kalla is built, has been artificially separated from the parent mountain, so as to secure a complete isolation. A piece of the rock at this end juts out in a most conspicuous manner over the street, and on its face is the almost obliterated figure of an Assyrian king, with the traces of a long inscription in cuneiform (contained in a niche, 6 feet by 4), which, however, is so defaced as (though easily traceable) to be utterly illegible. Close under the castle, at a slight elevation from the river, another mass of rock has been separated from the mountain, and then fashioned into separate blocks connected at their base, 50 feet high and 24 feet square at bottom, tapering up to 8 feet square, each containing a grot surrounded by a bell-shaped or rather conical top, very similar in shape and style to the curious roofs of the old churches throughout Armenia, which were copied in a modified form by the constructors of the Mahomedan Turbehs at Ikhlât and elsewhere. They are all of them ancient burial-places, full of bones, pieces of wooden coffins joined together by wooden pegs, and the fragments of long-necked bottles composed of a thin kind of glass. On the pedestals of several of the tombs rude human figures in high relief were cut on the stone, but their mutilated condition prevented me from being able to form any idea of the age to which they belonged. In a ravine that runs round the southern side of the mountain, as also on the left bank of the river, were numerous other grotts of the commoner sorts, none of them being of the same nature or size as those I have described, although all had been prepared with more care and attempt at ornament than is usual elsewhere.

* Kiepert, in his large map, has placed it on the left bank of the Tigris, and below the junction of the Maaden and Dibeneh rivers.

This town was called by the Syrians Agyl or Angyl, and the district, which was known to the ancient Armenians by the name of Ankegh,* was the same as that called Inghilene by the Greeks. Assemanus tells us it was also called Anchialus, and that it was plundered A.D. 503, in the reign of Anastasius, by the Persian King Cobad.†

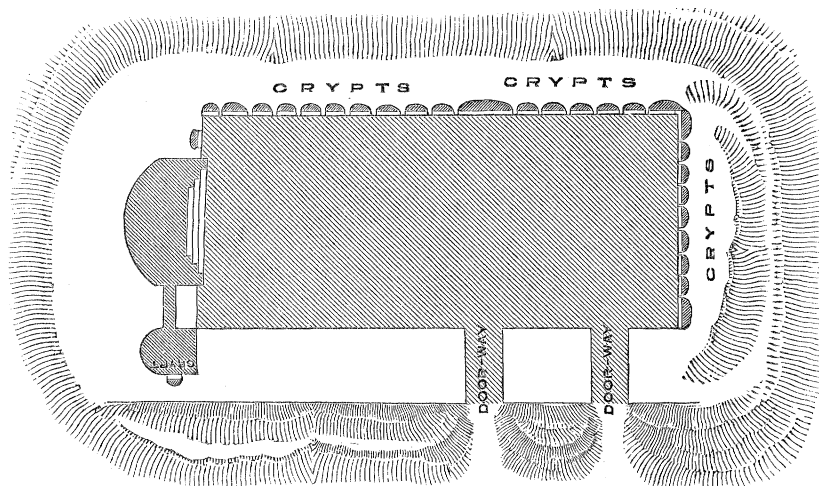
Three and a half hours from Eggil, and on the right bank of the Tigris, some way below the junction of the Maaden and Dibeneh branches, are the ruins of Jubeyr Castle, situated on the top of a mass of perpendicular rock that crops out of the summit of a high hill, a spur of the mountain-range there. The southern portion, on which the Kalla is built, has been separated, as at Eggil, by a deep and broad cutting, 120 feet long, 60 deep, and 30 wide at its weakest point from the main range, so as to have ensured it against any sudden capture by escalade. This point was further fortified by a huge mass of solid brickwork, rising to a height of many feet, which, subsequently, in the shape of a wall, follows the irregularity of the whole summit of the mound, enclosing an area of 400 yards long, with a breadth varying from 20 to 40. Higher up the stream, at the angle formed by the junction of the Arganeh Maaden and Dibeneh Sus, which form the western Tigris, are the ruins of Ammaneh Castle, occupying, as at Jubeyr, the top of an isolated mountain, but its position is incomparably stronger, from its greater height and comparative inaccessibility. It can be approached only at one side by a single path, hardly practicable for mules, the other two sides being high perpendicular rocks, washed respectively by the Dibeneh and Maaden rivers, the weakest portion deriving additional strength from walls of amazing thickness. The area of the summit is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile long, and 1 broad, and the whole, with the exception of a small portion of the southern end, is choked by the *débris* of old houses and reservoirs of black stone. On the north-eastern side of the mountain a covered stair cut out of the solid rock, as at Eggil, 280 feet high and 8 feet broad, leads down to the Dibeneh Su. The site, its impregnability, and extensive remains coincide, more than any other position or ruin I have seen, with that of Carca-thiocerta, which has been placed alternately at Miafarkeyn and Diarbekr.

First following the Dibeneh Su, and then ascending the upland, whose base it washes, I crossed to Heyni, visiting on my way the curious grot church, close to the fine Armenian Village of Dibeneh, which is scooped out of a mass of isolated rock on the left bank of the river of the same name. This place, from the numerous small crypts round its interior, is called by the

* 'Moses of Chorene,' vol. i. pp. 105-161.

† 'Asseman.,' lib. i. p. 273.

Moslems Elakhoor or Stable; but whatever it may be now, its original use cannot be mistaken, and it is in consequence venerated by all Armenians as the earliest temple of their faith. The church



No. 2. Plan of Grot Church (8 feet high), near Dibeneh. (Scale 20 feet to 1 inch.)

is entered by two wide, low doorways, and is capable of containing a congregation of 200 people with ease. The place where the altar stood is a commodious arched recess, approached by three steps, and communicating on the left with a small room, for the convenience of the priest and others connected with the church.

In its immediate neighbourhood there are several other grotts cut out of the rock, which, from the stone benches in them, and other marks and remains, appear to have formed dwelling-places for the inferior church officials. The natives told me that human remains were in such abundance all round the precincts of the church, that, for fear of desecrating them, they had forbore to till the ground about it, lest they should unwittingly exhume the relics of those they regard as their ancestors. For the same reason they have turned the course of a small stream, that formerly washed the rock into the plain.

The road from Dibeneh to Heyni runs part of the way through the beautiful valley of Pelishka and close to the low range of hills that bound the valley of Nerib at this side. The name of Nerib is curious as occurring in the great monolith inscription alluded to further back, in connexion with the march of the Assyrian King from that place to Tooskan or Kurkh, 14 hours (35 miles) distant. The great King reduced its unruly inhabitants to obedience, and destroyed their cities and strongholds. Now, as then, it is

inhabited by a set of Kurds (always in rebellion), living in their secluded and inaccessible valley, which still contains several ruins of very ancient date. Nerib is also the first point where the Zaza Kurdish is used, the Kermanji dialect being the one spoken in all Eastern and Southern Kurdistan.

Heyni, or Hani, is a pretty little town situated on the slope of a hill crowned by the ruins of an ancient castle. Some old Mahomedan buildings and an ancient square watch-tower, in the middle of the luxuriant gardens at the foot of the town, boast of great architectural beauty. One of the former, dedicated to a certain Zeineb (not the famous one), is built in the form of a cross, and has the Ayet el Kursee carved in beautiful letters all round the interior of the building. In the centre of the town a large spring, 200 feet in circumference, enclosed by masonry, supplies the town gardens and splendid clover-fields with beautiful clear cold water; it then emerges into the plain and forms the river called Ambar Su, which falls into the Tigris opposite Kurkh, as already noticed further back.

A ride of three hours by the villages of Feyter and Ooreh, or Hureh, from Heyni, took me to the interesting ruins called Kuishk i Kak and Afisios Daknaos, situated to the south of east of Heyni, on the top of a mountain-range separating the Lijeh from the Diarbekr plain. The remains are of the most solid construction, consisting of a series of arched rooms, and a little higher up of a temple, with several fragments of columns scattered about it. A magnificent uninterrupted view of the Sileywan, Lijeh, and Diarbekr plains is obtained from this spot, the eye ranging alternately over them, and long belts of thickly-wooded mountains. Our descent to the small plain beyond was through a mass of ruins that covered the slopes of the hill for a space of one mile, fragments of thick walls and neatly-cut blocks of stone were strewn over the road and impeded our progress, the remains of the old City of Fees (Phison of Procopius).^{*} A small village near them is also called Fees, Affis and Afisios. The inhabitants have a tradition that the ruins, and a small cave near it, was the spot tenanted by the Seven Sleepers and their canine guard, the Kelb i Kehef. The scene of this legend is generally reported to have taken place at Ephesus, near Smyrna; and here, curious enough, I procured several small silver coins with the ancient type of Ephesus—the bee on one side and the stag and palm-tree on the other; and I was informed that numerous coins, principally copper, which were always thrown away as having no value, were found among the ruins. Close to them, but on the Lijeh plain, are the ruins of Attakh or Hatakh, situated in the old province of Terjan, now

^{*} 'De Bello Persico,' lib. ii. cap. 24.

called Tarjil. This town is also mentioned by Procopius under the name of Attachä.* From here (still going south of east), passing the old ruins and convent of Tarjil or Terjan, and the town of Khuzru,† a beautiful ride took us to the lovely and fruitful valley of Halda.

During our ride to it we passed the villages of Ras el Ain, Andar, Khodik, Hondoff, and Meherani; our road being along an elevated ridge, with two charming well-cultivated valleys on either side of us. Meherani was situated on the extreme edge of the ridge, where it is bounded by a steep rocky mountain, on one of whose peaks the ruins of the old Meherani Castle frown down upon the smiling plains at its feet.

At the western end of Halda or Sawerz Valley was situated, on a high mountain peak, forming the end of a spur from the main ridge, which here runs into the valley, the castle of my friend Reshid Aga, the local chief. Opposite to it, on the eastern end, was a similar peak, three miles off, upon which are the remains of a very ancient strong fort called Boshat. The walls and stone composing them are of great thickness, and, as usual, the courtyard was regularly burrowed with large and small reservoirs for water. The Arabs, however, seem to have captured it without much difficulty, as well as the castle of Arshat (Halda) in its immediate vicinity.‡ At the base of the rock on which it is built there is a fine and spirited representation, in very high relief, of a Parthian warrior on horseback, and behind him another figure, but of a totally different type, with the hands bound and held up in a supplicating attitude, somewhat larger than life. The warrior's head has been much disfigured, but everything else, even to the shape of his clothes and armour, is remarkably well preserved. Beneath the figure is a large empty grot with a narrow doorway. Excepting in Arabic authors, I find no clue whatever to the old castle of Boshat; but the name of Halda seems to have originated in that of the Armenian divinity Haldia, the god of Ursa, King of Armenia, mentioned in the Van inscriptions, and in the great inscription of the Palace at Khorsabad.§

On emerging from the valley, the road debouches into the Ghazalee plain, on the right bank of the Batman Su. The road lies through a narrow gorge, which on the right hand has two high rugged rocks called by the natives the ruins of Bukht Nusser's

* 'De Bello Persico,' lib. i. cap. 31.

† The name of "Khuzru," and that of the neighbouring district of "Khuzu," situated as they are, near the sources of one of the affluents of the Tigris, are suggestive of the Khuzirina of the Assyrians.—See Professor Rawlinson's 'Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 258.

‡ El Wakidi in his فتوح ديار ربيع وديار بكر.

§ 'Journal Asiatique,' Sixme. Serie, tome i. pp. 14, 15.

Castle. Enticed by the name, I clambered up with some difficulty to the top, but saw nothing more than a confused heap of stones. All about this neighbourhood are numerous sacred groves; the largest were called Derees Jimishar and Pir i Bad, the other names were Mahomedan, consisting for the most part of stunted oak and a species of poplar, with long, narrow, spear-like leaves which tremble and quiver with the slightest breath of air. These groves each bear the name of some pretended Mahomedan saint; but their presumed sanctity is more ancient than the era of the Islam conquest, and dates probably from the time when the Armenians had such groves, and adored certain kinds of trees, one of which, the Sos (plane-tree), was particularly the object of their veneration.* Three hours east of Halda I forded the Batman Su, at Bashkaia village, not far from Zodeeb ruins, and then turned round, first north, and then west to Duzla (eight hours from Heyni), crossing on my journey all the head waters forming the Batman Su, called by the natives the Kulp, Kaushan, and Sarum Sus.† At Duzla I was again near the Dibeneh Su, and, striking across the country till I reached it, followed its course to the source, a distance of nine miles from this. About three miles below the sources the river enters a high cave, 80 feet high and two miles long, running north-east and south-west, and emerges from it near the village of Korkhar, at a point where the rocks are smooth and hard. Here, just outside the cave, on the right bank, and some twenty feet up the face of the rock, is the figure of an Assyrian king, with ten lines of a cuneiform inscription, in excellent preservation. Further inside the cave, but on an uneven and misshapen part of the rock, is another figure and inscription, but unfortunately, owing to the irregularities of the surface and other causes, in a nearly illegible state.‡ During

* 'Moses of Chorene,' vol. i. cap. 20, p. 95.

† At Millaia village, about 14 miles from Duzla, is a curious subterranean church. Entrance to it was obtained by a flight of steps in the courtyard of our Christian host's house. It is of great antiquity, and is dedicated to Mart Shamoon and her seven children, who suffered martyrdom under Antiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 174, for refusing to eat hogs' flesh at his order. The event is recorded to have taken place at the village of Susandra in Judea. A rude daub representing Antiochus with his radiated crown sitting on a throne, and the mother and her children before him, is hung up over the high altar, and commemorates the fact.

‡ Sir H. Rawlinson says one inscription and figure is that of Tiglath Pileser, B.C. 1110, and the other that of Ashur Izir Pal, B.C. 880, the King of the Nimroud Monolith. See Professor Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies.' The inscription, as translated by Sir H. Rawlinson, is "By the grace of Asshur, Shamas and Iva the great gods, I Tiglath Pileser, King of Assyria, son of Asshur-ris-illum, King of Assyria, who was the son of Mutaggil-Nebo, King of Assyria, marching from the great sea of Akhiri (the Mediterranean) to the sea of Nairi (Lake Van), for the third time have invaded the country of Nairi." This monument exhibits the earliest Assyrian sculpture known to exist, and is mentioned by Asshur-idannipal, the father of the black obelisk king, in his great inscription.—Professor Rawlinson's 'Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 331.

the spring floods, the river, confined in a narrow gorge with high perpendicular cliffs, comes down with immense force; the north-east end of the cave is naturally, therefore, a mass of fallen rock and smaller fragments; so, if at any time another inscription existed there, it must from these causes have disappeared long ago. I am inclined to believe that from the numerous *débris* which now choke the stream, and the cave-like appearance through which it runs, this subterranean channel of the Tigris, or Dibeneh Su, extended close up to its sources, and thus gave some countenance to the fabulous length of its underground course as mentioned by Strabo. The cave to the south-east ends close to the first inscription, but a few yards farther on the river passes through another high natural arch before it enters upon its course through the plain. A few hundred yards from this point it has again fallen in, and the remains of an old bridge composed of cut stone let into the natural rock are visible on both sides of, but high up, the cliff. At one side of the cave, but perched up on the top of the mountain it has pierced, are the ruins of a small ancient fort. From it a flight of narrow steep steps, cut out of the face of the rock, leads down to a shelf, from which, entering by a narrow doorway, another stair, tunnelled in the solid stone, conducts to an opening in the roof of the cave, at a considerable height, however, from the water, which, as there is no reason to believe that the stair was intended for anything else than as a means of supplying the garrison of the fort with water, must have been obtained by a bucket and rope. At the base of the hill is a small level spot, round the edges of which are the remains of old buildings and a dilapidated arch. The country a little beyond this is called Dhu'l Karneyn, but in old Arab authors the Castle alone, the position of which is accurately described therein, is mentioned by that name.*

The early Arab geographers seem to have been perfectly aware of this source of the Tigris, which they regarded as the main branch, and described it as being north of Miafarkeyn, and close to the castle of Dhul Karneyn.† Near it is an immense stalactite cave, called Bakireyn, with innumerable passages branching off in every direction: the natives say it extends to Erzerum. Accompanied by a large party of Kurds, with torches and candles, I followed the main passage for about one hour, and was then forced to return without finding an opening at the other end.

The fanciful imagination of the Kurds had induced them to believe that the fantastic shapes of the stalactites were representa-

* El Wakidi, Futooh Diar Rebia wa Diar Bekr, Abul Feda, Taqweem ul Buldan.

† Abul Feda Taqweem ul Buldan, and see also El Kahramani in his MS. entitled كتاب اخبار الدول واناوالاول.

tions of men and beasts, idols of an earlier age; and they thought my visit to a spot which they all avoid was a pilgrimage to the Pantheon of heathen ancestors.

This part of the Diarbekr Pashalik was a few years ago known by the name of Khanchoot, a corruption of the old name of Handsith,* called by the Armenians Andsda, by the Syrians Hanzyth and Anzyth, and by the Greeks of the middle ages Kanzit,† and is probably the Anzetene of Ptolemy,‡ one of the eight provinces composing the Fourth Armenia. From here a mountainous road conducted me to the purely Kurdish districts of Genj, Zigtee, Yehki, and Taos; then crossing the Euphrates or Murad Su, at the Armenian Village of "Dyk" or "Tyg," I went through the Tchabakchoor plain, following the course of the Goonik Su and the fruitful Boghlan Valley; then across the hills to the old convent of Surh Garabed. I found the whole fraternity hopelessly involved in clerical squabbles, which they attributed to the advanced views of their bishop. I learnt subsequently that the prelate, who was a very enlightened and well-read man, had, disgusted at the levity and open profligacy of the priests, attempted to reform their character and curtail amusements scandalous to their cloth, and, at the same time, to introduce a better and more liberal system of education among the *élèves* for the priesthood than then existed. His views displeased the old bigots about him, who soon after procured his recall to Constantinople, on the pretence of his having favoured Protestantism.

From Changerli, as this convent is also called, I descended into the plain of Mush, and not far from that town visited the site of Khoren or Khorni, the birthplace of the famous Moses of Chorene, the disciple and friend of Saint Mesrob, the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, in the fifth century. Khoren is situated in the ravine at the foot of the mountain, on whose slope is the famous Armenian monastery of Arakolets Vank. The latter I found tenanted by an old greybeard bishop, who, it appeared to me, from an elaborately painted snuff-box of Parisian make (he had at his side), had not quite given up a desire for worldly pleasures. He had just arrived at the place, after a long exile in an out-of-the-way convent, as a punishment for having formerly indulged too ostentatiously in secular practices, which even among men of the world might be termed vicious. All around seemed falling into inevitable decay; the rooms were bare and wretched, and the old bishop had to content himself with the humble cigarette, instead of the jewelled chibook of former days. In the church I saw a fine old manuscript copy of the New Testament in Armenian, written on vellum, and also an elaborately-carved ebony door,

* Ibn el Athir.

† Abul Furruij.

‡ 'Geog.' lib. v. cap. 13.

which, I was informed, had been sent many centuries ago from India, as a votive offering to the church. It bore a well-executed carving of a procession of horse and foot, elephants and tigers in high relief, sufficiently curious in itself as the gift of a remote Armenian colony; it was more so as showing the ancient costume of that fallen nation, and the kind of armour worn by the valiant soldiers of Sempad, one of whose numerous expeditions it purported to represent.

From here, crossing the Kara Su—I had previously forded the Murad, into which it flows—I proceeded to Treymerd, an Armenian village at the eastern end of the fine Mush plain. At the back of the village is an ancient mound, with an old church on it, built of large blocks of black stone, and surrounded by broken columns and graves, with enormous headstones of the same material, carved with crosses, flowers, and inscriptions, in the old Armenian. In hunting about these remains I discovered three fragments of a large pyramidal stone, bearing on both sides a sharply-cut inscription in the Van cuneiform. Several pieces were wanting, and the larger one I had found was, in addition, much mutilated by a large round hole that had been scooped out of its centre, in order to form one of the rude mills formerly in use among the villagers. This piece, when I discovered it, was doing duty as a headstone for the grave of a defunct ecclesiastic. An old Armenian priest, who pretended to more historical knowledge than most of his cloth, informed me that in a book in his possession, the ‘Ashkharatsuts,’ it was stated, that during the times of the idol-worship, three brothers came from the vicinity of Baghdad, called Mushiak, Tameyder, and Oспенik. The first founded Mush, the second Treymerd, and the third, Oспенik Kalla, near Sekhano, in the plain.

I find some corroboration of this legend in an interesting article by Mons. J. B. Emin, of Moscow (translated by M. A. de Stadler), who, however, only mentions two brothers, named Kisane and Temedr, whom he represents as coming from India, and as having been established by Valarsaces, 150 years B.C., in the province of Daron (Mush).* On the western side of the Mush plain there are five other mounds, equidistant from each other, and two of them of some extent, all of them marking very ancient sites. Not far from this, in the Khunnus-district, is the village of Haramyk, tenanted by a primitive set of Armenians, who professed a faith similar to Protestantism. They were known to the old Armenians as the Thontracites, from the village of Thontrag, the residence of their founder, and had their rise in A.D. 840.†

* ‘Revue de l’Orient,’ tome xviii., sur la ‘Paganisme Armenien,’ p. 217.

† ‘Revue de l’Orient,’ tome xvii.; Lasdiverd’s ‘Hist. of Armenia,’ pp. 9-21.

In spite of the most dreadful persecutions, they still managed to hold their own till within the last few years, when most of those that remained in the old faith joined the Presbyterian American Church. I was informed that some of them who had emigrated to the Russian territory, near Gumri, still clung to their old faith, and that they used a Prayer-book called the 'Panalee Jismardutyán,' or Key of Truth; but others said it was taken away from them by their Russian masters.

Proceeding along the south-eastern side of the Mush plain, a march of $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours brought me to the head of the Kara Su River,* one of the numerous streams that fall into the Murad or Euphrates. The water was welling out of a large circular fathomless hole of volcanic origin, having a circumference of 100 feet, situated in the middle of the plain. The effect of the water perpetually overflowing the crater, without the slightest effort or bubble of any kind, was very remarkable, as it seemed hardly possible that the numerous brawling streams that it supplied could owe their origin to this unruffled and apparently motionless reservoir. Close by was a Turbeh, in the Ikhlát style, of a certain Qarabedani Agha, bearing the date of Ramadhan, 5th A.H. 687. From here, by the usual caravan road, I reached Bitlis in five hours. After a few days' rest I again proceeded on my journey, following the banks of the Bitlis Su, through magnificent scenery, but over a wretched track in confined passes to within a few hours of Saert, when I diverged from the main road, close to the ruined Kalla of Durbeen, in a southerly direction, to the Village of Deyr Zin, a corruption for Deyr Azinar, so called from the remains of an old castle of that name, built on the top of one of the highest mountain-peaks in the neighbourhood. The view from the keep was most magnificent: on two sides was a confused heap of steep mountains, and on the others the Shirwan and Ispaert uplands, and Gharzan and Sileywan plains. From Deyr Zin my road lay through a charming country and scenery, west to Minareh, and then north-west by Weys el Quran and Mileyfan, famous for its salt-works, to Huzu or Khuzu, the capital of the Sassoon district, and the seat of its Mudir. Huzu, or, as it is also called, Khuzu, is a tolerable town for Kurdistan, built upon one end of the mountain-range that bounds the Gharzon or Arzen Valley, intersected by the Huzu Arzen or Redhwan Su, which, not far from this point, breaks through the mountains and debouches into the plain. At one side of the town is a mass of nearly perpendicular rock, situated on the edge of a deep ravine, through which a small

* The main branch of the Euphrates that flows near Erzerum is also called the Kara Su, and must not be confounded with this one.

branch of the Huzu Su flows.* On the top of this rock are the remains of a modern fort with old foundations, and down one side a long belt of rock, containing a regular series of small grotts, equidistant from each other about 10 feet from the ground; one at the back of the ruins is more extensive, and double, the outer grot being 4 feet by 6, and the inner one 6 feet by 10. Two miles from this, in the bed of the ravine, is the ancient Armenian convent of Nor Sheen, or Nor Shiragan. It is dedicated to the holy cross, and contains a substantial portion of the cross-beam to which the faithful in such relics attach supernatural qualities. The dissolute old bishop who presides over the establishment, and who looked more like a brigand than a priest, told me that it was built 1400 years ago, and that its sanctity was so great that thousands flocked to it yearly from Russia, Syria, and Armenia. Numerous small streams coming from the Sassoon and Moodikan mountains commingle a few miles above the convent, and their united waters form the river before mentioned, and which is noted in Kiepert's Map as the Yezid Khaneh Su. The ruins of an old bridge, bearing an inscription 800 years old, chokes the stream close to the village; and near it are several excavations made by the natives in search of salt, which is procured in large slabs about an inch thick, singularly pure, and having the appearance of opaque crystal.

Retracing a former journey by Zok and Arzen, I reached Redhwan, following the course of its river.

Two hours before reaching Redhwan, close to the ruins of Mamika Castle and the ruined Zialet of Sholeen, on the right and left bank of the Arzen Su, are the ruins of a fine bridge of four arches; a part of it remains in good preservation, and was amply sufficient to show the magnificence and solidity of the original structure. The whole, when intact, was a double way covered in with solid masonry to suit the purposes and prevent the confusion incidental to a constant and active cross traffic. Each way is 8 feet broad, with a raised pavement on either side for the convenience of foot passengers. In no part of the East have I ever seen a nobler relic, or one of a similar construction so suggestive of an active civilization and a teeming opulent population. I regret I could not fix the actual date of its erection, although from its style I should be inclined to attribute it to the earlier Eioobites. From Redhwan I went by Ushey Kalla, situated on an upland about three miles from the Bohtan Su to Ba Til, three miles

* St. Martin confounds Huzu, which the Armenians pronounce Hzuu and Khzuu, with Hizan, another and totally distinct district and town north of Saert. This is the more curious, as he nevertheless places Huzu correctly in Sassoon.—'St. Martin Mem. sur l'Arménie,' vol. i. pp. 175, 176.

above the confluence of the Bitlis Chai with the Bohtan. From here the Taulik Pass, a steep and rugged ascent of an hour and a half, brought us to the crest of the mountain overlooking the small Saert plain, and in another hour and a quarter reached the town itself.

From Saert, first descending the precipitous Hauraz Soro Pass on the right bank, and then following the left bank of the Bohtan Su, coming through splendid wild mountain scenery from the east, and crossing some of its tributaries, I arrived, in seventeen hours, at Khoskheyr, on the Shattak Su, the capital of the Bohtan Berwaree district, passing eighteen miles from it the large Christian villages of Dantass and Feroze, situated on either side of a deep ravine absolutely choked with enormous walnut-trees and luxuriant fruit-gardens and cultivation. About three miles north-west of Khoskheyr the Möx and Shattak rivers join, and the united streams then take the name of the Bohtan Su till it is finally absorbed in the Tigris, at Til.

The country between Saert and Khoskheyr, and indeed generally in this part of Kurdistan, is a succession of hills and mountains with well-cultivated uplands and deep fertile valleys. The higher mountains take the same course as the rivers, with lower connecting ridges between them. The Bohtan Su, and streams that flow down to it, passing through grand mountain scenery, are lined in many places by a thick fringe of almost impervious orchards, woods, and vineyards, encircling picturesque villages. Each bend of the river reveals new beauties, and the traveller, while contemplating these charming and peaceful-looking spots, can hardly reconcile their existence with the lawless character of the savage country, and of the people who tenant them. A closer visit, however, dispels much of this delightful illusion, and reveals a state of poverty, wretchedness, anarchy, and ruthless despotism hardly credible to any but those who have taken the trouble to step out of their path to judge of things with their own eyes.

Khoskheyr* is situated at one end of the Harakol mountain, that here slopes down upon the Bohtan Su. It is several hundred feet above the river, and the slope to it is covered with numerous carefully-cultivated gardens, yielding the finest peaches, grapes, figs, pears, and sultane raisins I ever saw or tasted. The town itself contained, four years ago, 260 houses; at present there are scarcely 120, and of this small number 50 had been gutted and burnt a few days before my arrival, in a conflict between two

* The capital of the Bohtan Berwaree. Berwaree is derived from the Kurdish "Berwar," meaning a shelf or step, as all the villages are built on the shelves or slopes of the hills. May it not be derived from the old Armenian King "Barouir"?

local hostile parties whose chiefs were litigating before the Turkish governor at Saert. The Kurds here belong to a tribe originally Yezid, called Adian or Adiites, descendants as they say of the real Sheikh Adi, the saint of those extraordinary people.

Having been informed at Saert that arrow-headed inscriptions and Assyrian sculptures existed at Hozeem, a village a few miles up the left bank of the Möx Su, in the peninsula formed by the close proximity of that and the Shattak river, I made preparations to visit it on foot, as the impracticability of the mountain road made it nearly impossible to reach it on horseback. Leaving my servants and baggage at Khoskheyr, and accompanied by some Kurds as guides, I crossed the Shattak Su to its right bank by one of the composite wood-and-wicker bridges so common in Kurdistan. Before us were the steep barren heights of the Churruk Dag, which occupied two laborious hours in ascending; but our fatigue was well rewarded by the extensive panorama obtained on arriving at its extreme height. To our right and left were the Shattak and Möx Sus, separated only from each other by a narrow though high mountain-ridge (from which I procured some rich specimens of copper and lead ore), running parallel to them, while before us was the smiling valley of Bidar, backed by its old castle, and embedded in its fruitful and luxuriant gardens. Our road to it was by an abrupt descent equally fatiguing as the ascent, but far more exhilarating, as we had the advantage of walking a greater part of the way in the shade of different kinds of trees that clothed the slopes. Another two and a half hours' walk brought us to the village, after we had crossed the Möx Su to its right bank. The distance between the Möx and Shattak rivers here is scarcely 400 yards, and the villagers informed me that in ancient times a canal had connected them at this point. The mountains that rise perpendicularly behind the village form part of the present Mudirlik of İspaert, a name originally applied also to the contiguous north-western districts, and forming part of the old Hysparitis of Strabo.* After a short rest, we proceeded, still on foot, by an execrable mountain-path (leaving the Möx Su on our right) towards a high peak called Sir i Khach or head of the cross. It took us one and a half hour reaching it, when we again had the Möx Su close to, but hemmed in by steep frowning cliffs, and the village of Akük in a small fertile plain below us. Descending into it, we were again on the river, our road being along its left bank close up to Hozeem, where we crossed it by a rude bridge, and reached that village in three hours from Bidar. I was disappointed, on arriving, to find that the much-vaunted inscription was nothing more than a collection of small crosses that had been scratched on the smooth face of

* Strabo, lib. xi.

the rock by the children of the place, while what had been taken for the sculpture was simply a huge mass of misshapen rock that had fallen from the heights above. Travellers in the East are so subject to similar disappointments that they think little of them; and in this case I was amply rewarded for the fatigue of my walk in having been able to ascertain the real courses of the headwaters of the Eastern Tigris, and to visit a beautiful and interesting portion of Kurdistan never before trod by Europeans. In the centre of the village was a fine old church* with an elaborately-carved doorway. Similar work also decorated the interior, but the natives had taken considerable pains to cover it with mud and plaster so as not to excite the cupidity of the Kurds. Behind the village, and about twelve miles north-east of it, is the high mountain of Aghovar, at the base of which is a cave from which issues the Mōx Su.

The distance from this cave, and the nearest point of the great Van lake is scarcely 30 miles of mountainous country; and it is possible that Strabo might have alluded to this branch of the Tigris when describing the origin of that river to be in Lake Thospitis, and its subsequent underground course on emerging from it. As it is probable that he never visited the site, for a description of which he was indebted to native reports, he might easily, from its described contiguity to the lake, have been inclined to believe in the myth he has propagated.† The following tabulated form will give the names and sources of the different rivers forming the Upper Tigris, beginning at its extreme western or Arganeh Maaden branch:—

WESTERN TIGRIS.	
<i>Names.</i>	<i>Sources.</i>
Arganeh Maaden River. Dibeneh Su. (These two unite as described at Ammaneh Castle, and form the Diarbekr branch of the Tigris.)	Rising 20 miles west of Arganeh Maaden town, and 10 miles south of the centre of the Guljik or Kharput Lake. Dibeneh Su, rising 4 miles n.w. of Korkar village.
The Ambar Su	Rises at Heyni town, and falls into the Tigris opposite Kurkh.
The Batman Su—flowing 5 miles east of Miafarkeyn, and which is formed of the united waters of the Kulp, Kaushan, and Sarum Sus—falls into the Tigris opposite Zeywa village.	The Kulp Su rises about 12 miles north of Nerjiki village. The Kaushan Su, 14 miles n.w. of Nerjiki, in the Darkush Dagħ, and the Sarum Su, 10 miles n. of Peychar, 30 miles n.w. of Nerjiki.

* Dedicated to St. Stephen, St. John, and the Mother of Christ.

† The Shattak River rises near the town of the same name. It is 20 miles east of Mōx. Mr. Layard says Shattak (or Shach) stands near the junction of two considerable streams forming one of the headwaters of the eastern Tigris, and uniting with the Bohtan Su. The largest comes from the district of Albagħ. —See Layard's 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 420.

The Khuzu, Huzu, Arzen, Redhwan, or Yezid Khaneh Su.

A collection of small brooks and streams that commingle 8 miles N. of Huzu Town, falls into the Tigris 8 miles W. of Til junction of East and West Tigris.

EASTERN TIGRIS.

The Bitlis Chai, which is the united waters of that and the Keyzer or Shirwan Rivers, and falls into the Bohtan Su near Ba Til.

Bitlis Su rises about 8 miles N. of Bitlis.

Keyzer or Shirwan Su rises in Shirwan district, 14 miles N.W. of Saert, and joins the Bitlis Su at Gunday Millan, 6 miles S.W. of Saert.

The Bohtan Su, which falls into the Tigris at Til, is composed of the Bitlis Su (above), the Möx, Shattak, Chamkaree and Sarhal Sus.

Möx Su at Aghovar Cave, Shattak Su rises near Shach; they join 8 miles N.W. of Khoskheyr. Shattak Su receives the Chamkaree Su 6 miles N.E. of Bidar. Sarhal Su rises 14 miles E. of Khoskheyr, and falls into the Bohtan Su at Kellees.

Unlike the comparatively sluggish branches composing the Western Tigris, which, before uniting with the trunk stream, generally flow through plains of alluvium, the streams of the Eastern Tigris run with arrow-like swiftness through deep rocky beds pent in by high mountains. Practicable fords at all seasons are rarely met with; and for this reason the different rivers composing it are, even in these degenerate times, better bridged than those composing the western branch.

I walked back to Khoskheyr by a rude and difficult mountain-path that follows the course of the Shattak Su, and reached it in six and a half hours from Hozeem. All the working and industrious portion of the population of the mountainous districts here, and generally throughout Kurdistan, are Armenian and Nestorian Christians, living in a state of serfage, they being the property of the local Kurdish chiefs, who call them their "Zeer Khurlees," a term signifying bought with the yellow—meaning gold; as, in fact, they are bought and sold in the same manner as sheep and cattle. This custom originated of course in the absence of any recognised government, and in the consequent independence and power of the Begs and Aghas upon whom the Christians were dependent. To ensure their protection, they first paid them yearly sums in cash, on the same principle as the Arab Khooa, but subsequently their increasing poverty and the avarice of the chiefs made it impossible for them to make the usual payments; and to avoid expulsion, therefore, from their old lands and country, they voluntarily submitted to the pernicious system under which they now live. Like the serfs in Russia, they are disposed of with the lands they cultivate, but cannot be sold individually, though the chief can appropriate as much as he wishes from their yearly earnings,

capital or goods. As an instance of the light in which they are regarded by their Moslem owners, I will cite a fact that was brought to my notice in these parts, and corroborated by the Turkish authorities. The "Zeer Khurlee" of one of the chiefs was shot by another Kurdish Agha; his owner did not attempt to retaliate upon the murderer, but quietly shot two of his "Zeer Khurlees," although they had no part in the assassination of their co-religionist.

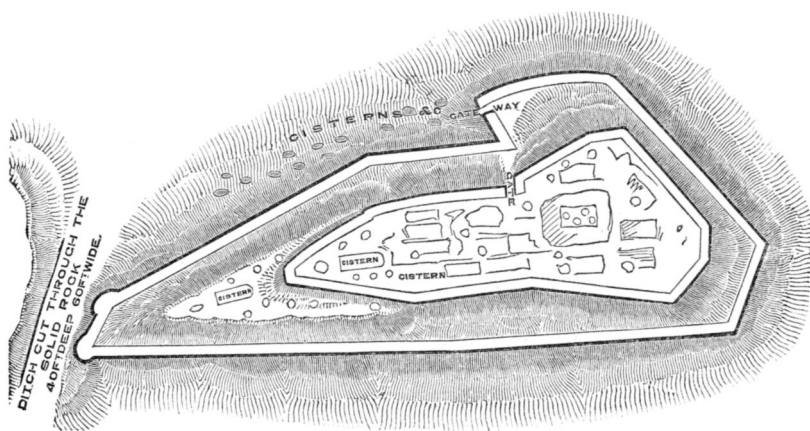
From Khoskheyr, after following the course of the Sarhal Su, another large tributary of the Bohtan Su, which it joins at Kellees, and visiting the districts of Eyruh, Deh, and Deyr Gul, I proceeded to Jezireh,* and then west to Ispiss, in the Jebel Tur. It is situated in the middle of a mass of ruins, the relics of an ancient and very large town. At its north-east end is a deep and nearly inaccessible ravine, through which a small stream runs towards and falls into the Tigris, irrigating in its course extensive rice-fields and gardens. On the edge of the cliff are the ruins of an old church, built, like the town, of black basalt. Three miles farther off, on the banks of a similar but dry ravine, are the ruins of Feer, where local traditions have it Shapoor put 6000 Christians to death on account of their religion, and for having induced his son to adopt their faith. In the mountainous country about this and Jezireh there is a kind of wild silk, procured in such quantities that the native women use it extensively for dresses. It is called Quz and Jez,† and is the produce of a caterpillar that feeds on a low shrub with dark-green serrated leaves, bearing clusters of flowers similar to the laburnum, which in time produce a bunch of pods very similar to beans. Striking south-west, in the direction of the Mesopotamian plain, by the villages of Giri Worseh, Hazarnukh, and Delavi Kusri, we arrived at the old ruins known

* The Tigris at Jezireh was formerly spanned by two fine stone buildings. Of the one near the town no vestiges beyond pieces of the buttresses exist, but of the second, which was some way below it, an entire arch near the right bank still remains. On its southern cornice the signs of the Zodiac, with their names in early Arabic, are carved with considerable spirit, nearly the size of life.¹ In the town itself the most interesting remains are the ruins of the old castle of the Attabegs, with a beautiful circular Saracenic mosque in one of the courts, and the old mosque, with a magnificent bronze door curiously embossed and ornamented, raised by the Zengide Abu el Qassem Makhmood Moez ed' Deen Sinjar Shah ebn Ghazi, in the sixth century of the Hejireh, on the site of the old Christian convent of Mar Yohanna. On several parts of the walls are old defaced Arabic inscriptions, but on the Babel Tor, in rude Cufic, is a record of Ezel Islam Saaded Dowlet Abi Ahmed ebn Merwan—the Kurd Merwainde—of the fifth century of the Hejireh.

† Pliny alludes to this silk in his *Nat. Hist.*, xi. 23.

¹ Built by Jemal ed Deen Abu Jaafer Mehemed ebn Ali ebn Abi Mansoor El Isfahanee, Wezeer of Quth ed' Deen Modood, Attabeg of Mosul. Ibu Athir, A.H. 558, vol. xi. fol. 204.; Abul Feda, vol. iii. fol. 592.

here as the Hatem Tai Kalla situated on a hill in a mountain gorge overlooking the plain near Bazara village, where I purchased a fine coin of Demetrius Soter, and several Cufic, Byzan-



No. 3. Plan of Hatem Tai Castle (ancient Sisaurodon).

N.B.—All the circular marks are cisterns excavated out of the solid rock.

tine, and Roman medals. Considerable pains had evidently been lavished to make this fort as impregnable as possible; and at points where it seemed easy of access, the rock had been cut away, and inclines made steep and inaccessible by means of masonry. The principal buildings were constructed upon a rock that springs out of the summit of the hill; and some extensive reservoirs for water, of great depth, were scooped out of the rock, and then arched over with stonework, as at Dara. The whole was encircled by a strong wall; and some little way from, and below it, another wall, following the contour of the hill, surrounded the first. It was further strengthened and isolated by a cutting through the rock, similar to those alluded to in other ruined castles I have described. This place appears to me to be identical with the Persian fort of Sisaurodon, which Procopius narrates was surrendered to Georgius, an officer of Belisarius, while on his march from Nisibin to the Tigris.* Four hours and a half west of Hatem Tai is the convent of Mar Bauai; and near it, in the mountains, the celebrated old monastery of Mount Izla, the seat and burialplace of the disciple of Hilarion, Mar Auageem, or Eugenius, who first introduced monastic institutions into Mesopotamia. Not far from this are the ruins of another fort, called

* Procop. De Bel Pers., lib. ii. cap. 19.

Kalla Jedeed, a relic of the early Moslem period. From Mar Bauai I went to Nisibin.

The important events that occurred in and about this old town when it was known under the different names of Zobah,* Nisibis, and Antiochia of the Mygdonians, would in themselves fill a volume; and the recollection of the mighty deeds that were performed here dispose one to dismiss the idea that the limited collection of vile hovels that now mark the site could ever have been the arena for such important events. The only relics that exist of its more ancient date are fragments of some massive columns and heaps of rubbish a little distance from the town; while the early Christian period is marked by the imposing ruins of the large church of St. James, or Jacob of Nisibis, who was raised to that see A.D. 325.† During his episcopate‡ Shapoor besieged the city for seventy days; the pious prelate ascended the walls, and, with eyes upraised to heaven, implored aid from God, who sent such a swarm of gnats and flies§ as to drive the Persian army away.||

It is known to the Armenians as Medzpine, and was given by Arsaces to his brother Vagharschag (Valarsaces), "the beautiful, the skilful archer," as his capital.¶ According to them, the early Abgari held their court here; and it was the residence of their gods Naboc, Bel, Patriecagh, and Tarata!*** Destroyed by an earthquake, it was rebuilt by Sanadrong, who encircled it with double walls and ramparts.†† Naboc, or Napok, is conjectured to be the Assyrian Nebo;‡‡ and the valley of the Jaghjagha, north of Nisibin, which will be described presently, is known under the name of the Wadi Bir Nussr by the Arabs, from an Arab chief of that name; but, at the same time, it is highly suggestive, as being derived from the name of the idol formerly worshipped here. The Nisibin River is called the Jaghjagha (Mygdonius of the Greeks, Hermas of Abul Feda), which falls into the Khaboor (Abornai of Judith, Chaboras and Aborras of the Romans) some way below the town. Above the town (where it emerges from the hills) the Jaghjagha has been divided into several small streams, for irri-

* The name of Zobah is preserved to this day in the name of a Bedouin tribe of the same name who encamp in its vicinity. They are now considered as belonging to the Shamr, but they themselves lay claim to being, with the Tai, the early possessors of this region long before the Shomr invasion. Nazibina of the Assyrians.—See Professor Rawlinson's 'Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 258.

† 'Assemanus,' vol. i. p. 17.

‡ Abul Furruf states the siege took place under the episcopate of St. Ephraim Syrus.

§ Ibid., vol. i. p. 26, Abul Furruf, 'Hist. of the Dynasties.'

|| This tradition is perfectly reconcilable with what I have myself experienced in this vile place, and from the recollections I have of weary days pestered by flies, and sleepless nights devoured by mosquitoes, when I was compelled on several occasions to make it my headquarters late in the year.

¶ 'Moses of Chorene,' vol. i. p. 39.

*** Ibid., vol. i. p. 209.

†† Ibid., vol. i. p. 237.

‡‡ 'Revue Orientale,' vol. xviii. p. 221, "Sur la Paganisme Armen."

gating the large cotton and rice-plantation in its neighbourhood. From carelessness in irrigation a great quantity of the water escapes, and forms large marshy plots, which in summer and autumn emit pestilential exhalations, producing very pernicious fevers. In those seasons it is shunned by the Bedouins, who, however, flock there in winter and spring, to obtain their necessary supplies, and to dispose of their produce. The northern part of Mesopotamia, in which Nisibin is situated, is peopled by Arabs and Turcomans. The former consist of the Shamr and the Tai, who are dependent upon the Shamr now, although they formerly were the real owners of the pasturages. It is only seventy years ago that the Shamr, under Faresebn Omr ebn Mehemed ebn Abdul 'Aziz, first came from Nejd, and occupied the country, the present Sheik Ferhan being the grandson of Fares ebn Omr, from whom the country they roam over is sometimes called by them Jeziret ebn Fares. It is hardly necessary to say that they pay no tribute whatever to the Turkish Government; on the contrary, their head-men receive a monthly salary from the Turks, and levy, in addition, black mail from every traveller and caravan passing through their territory, and also from all the villages and towns in the plains subject to them. They are the curse of the country, and have totally put a stop to everything like cultivation and improvement in the splendid tracts they call their own. Under a strong and liberal government, and with the water system, climate, and soil of that part of Northern Mesopotamia terminated by the Jaghjagha and Khaboor, several thousand bales of cotton alone, of a very fair quality, might be raised annually. Some two hundred years ago it used to be a favourite crop with the natives; and at that time Marco Polo* was astonished at its quantity and fineness. Now, however, the country is literally a desert—a vast uninhabited plain, though studded profusely with old tumuli and heaps of rubbish, the former abodes of an exuberant, peaceful, and industrious population.

The names and numbers of the different tribes, Bedouin and Fellaheen, subject to them are exhibited in the following table:—

	Tents.									
Khuresseh ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	800
Fedagha ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,000
Thabet ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,000
Abdeh ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,000
Aamood ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	700
Es' Saieh :—										
Saieh ..	500									2,500
El Eslem	1500	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Es' Sedeyd	500	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Carried forward	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9,000

* Marsden's 'Marco Polo,' p. 47.

						Tents.
Brought forward	..	..	..	..	..	9,000
Fedagha, a tribe of Aenezee, with the Shamr	..	..	..	..	..	3,000
Tai Arabs, with Shamr	..	..	..	..	..	1,500
						<hr/>
Tents	..	..	..	..	..	13,500
						<hr/>
Souls	..	..	..	..	..	81,000

All these tribes are also subdivided into septs. The Mehemed, or reigning tribe, belongs to the Khuresh.

FELLAHEEN TRIBES SUBJECT TO THE SHAMR.

										Tents.
Jeboor	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,500
Baggara	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,000
Sherabieen	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	600
Khudhr	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,000
Harb	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	600
Hadidieen	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,000
Albu Aasi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	500
Ghassameh	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	400
										<hr/>
Tents	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8,600
										<hr/>
Souls	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	51,600

All these pay tribute to the Shamr in money, grain, and cattle.

The Turcoman tribes (they are called erroneously Kurds) are the Milleea and Kikeea, and are the descendants of the old Artokide Kings. Like the Fellaheen, they are completely under subjection, and pay tribute to the all-powerful Shamr, in default of which they would be driven, without the slightest hope of redress, from the villages and pastures they have possessed since the downfall of their race. The Milleea number 600, and the Kikeea 1000 tents, and occupy the extreme northern part of Mesopotamia, from Mardin to Veyran Shehr, the ancient Tela.*

Three-quarters of an hour north of Nisibin, and on the left bank of its stream, where it emerges from a ravine of Jebel Tur into the plain, is a large flat-topped Assyrian tumulus, called Tel Nuas, a corruption probably of the Greek word, signifying a temple. The remains of brick, pottery, and glass, seemed very old; and I procured from the people about two stone cylinders that had been found among the *débris* at its base. The Jaghjagha has two sources, the Av i Spie, and the Av i Resh; the latter, however, being considerably farther from Nisibin than the former. As the course of the river had never been traced, or its sources visited

* The ruins at Veyran Shehr are massive and most extensive. They mark the site of Antipolis and Tela, which was restored by Constantius, A.D. 350, who then gave it the name of Constantina.—‘*Assemanus*,’ vol. i. p. 273.

by Europeans, I took this opportunity of reaching Mediat by the valleys through which the different streams and the Jaghaghia flow.

In entering the valley through which the river runs, the traveller is at once introduced into a different climate and scenery. The hot winds and sterile look of the plain are exchanged at once for cool breezes—umbrageous trees and thickly-wooded gardens and groves extending for a distance of several miles on both banks of the river, in strange contrast with the comparatively bare hills on either side. The size and abundance of the timber fully justified the name of the “Forests of Nisibis,” from which Trajan procured the materials for his fleet. Here and there, on the left hand, are fragments of old massive walls (but nothing in a connected form) up to the village and ruin of Kyr Banos, a distance of 12 miles; the district, as well as the valley of the river in which it is situated, being called the Boo Nusser. In two and a quarter hours we crossed to the left bank of the river—here a turbulent, deep, and rapid stream flowing in a rocky bed—to visit a ruined temple, 35 feet long, and 18 broad, called Chengi Sahaba. It has a double wall, built of large blocks of black stone, each one measuring 3 feet 3 inches long, and 2 feet 1 inch thick, situated in a confined and narrow angle of the gorge. Near it are numerous pieces of thick, ancient pottery, and an old grot, but no other remains. In half an hour from this I passed the junction of the Av i Spie, with the Av i Resh, and, following the former, reached its sources, consisting of a deep spring, and a stream that issues from the base of the mountain, half an hour afterwards. About the spring were masses of ruins, of the same construction and material as at Chengi Sahaba, but more extensive; and in the rock near it, several neatly-constructed and capacious grots. A gradual ascent, still north for a couple of hours, through a prettily-wooded country, brought us to the table-land of Jebel Tur, and a couple of miles farther on to Daleen village; from whence a ride of two hours west, over a rough mountain-road, conducted us to the ruins of Sha Resh or Dhu Rishk, situated in a small plain on the left bank of the Av i Resh, and a mile and a half below its source. These remains, though more extensive, are in the same style, and built of the same material as already noticed at the Av i Spie and Chengi Sahaba. They are surrounded, and nearly concealed from view by a grove of old oaks, evidently of a much later growth than the original date of the ruins, for the dilapidated courtyards and arches are now choked by the fallen branches and rotten trunks of many of the older specimens. A watercourse a mile long, $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad, and 5 deep, cut out of the solid rock, leads from the head of the Av i Resh close up to the centre of the ruins. The Av i Resh or black water, is, as its name denotes, of a darker colour

than the sparkling crystal streams that form the *Av i Spie* or white water, and has its rise in a deep sluggish pool near some old grots, similar to those about the sources of its sister stream. From here, a pleasant ride of four hours and a half, passing through *Anhel* and *Kushraf*, took me to *Mediat*, from whence I returned through the *Omerian* mountain and *Kharaib i Baba* to *Dara*, and then by the usual road to *Mardin* and *Diarbekr*.

The districts alluded to in this paper compose, as already stated, the modern Turkish province of Kurdistan. Watered by an infinity of noble streams, with a salubrious climate and rich soil, it yields to no other province for the variety and richness of its vegetable and animal produce, while its numerous mountain-chains abound in mineral wealth. Among its natural vegetable productions galls, gum-tragacanth, madder-roots, and the *Pistachio terebinthus*, from which the natives extract a fine oil (used in making soap) are the most important; the value of the export of the former alone being upwards of 35,000*l*. Oleaginous seeds and olive-oil are produced in large quantities; and the quality of the former is so superior that it finds its way to many of the northern governments. Sheep's wool was exported in 1863 to the value of 70,000*l*.; and mohair, the produce of the *Angora* goats, that thrive so wonderfully in the neighbourhood of *Jezireh*, was eagerly sought after, and bought up by native traders from *Kaiserieh* and *Constantinople*, in the same period, to the amount of 20,000*l*. The manufacture of native cotton cloths, shallees made from mohair, and short woollen cloaks, is actively pursued; and the shallee, for texture and variety of colour and pattern, shows the extraordinary natural intelligence of the Kurdish workmen. *Diarbekr* itself is famous for its silk piece-goods, similar to those of *Aleppo* and other parts of *Syria*; but, from its greater cheapness and durability, more in request among the poorer classes of the mountains between *Diarbekr* and the *Black Sea*. Sheep are exported in large quantities from the mountains and Desert to *Aleppo*, *Damascus*, and *Beyrout*; and camels, purchased from the Arabs, to *Kaiserieh* and other parts of *Asia Minor*. The uplands and hills abound in several species of polecat, marten, foxes, and wolves, whose furs add considerably in value to the sum total of the export list. A beautiful species of spotted lynx (*Wushek*) may be included among the former, although it is far more scarce than those enumerated. A rough estimate of the whole value of the vegetable and animal produce of the *Pashalik*, whether consumed at home or exported, will amount to more than 700,000*l*. sterling. The approximate amount of the population living in the 2702 villages and towns, or in the Desert under the *Diarbekr* government, is as tabulated below:—

	Moslem Houses.	Christian Houses.	Tezid Houses.	Kizzi Bash Houses.
Diarbekr Sanjek	23,497	8,740	228	1,516
Saert Sanjek	21,532	6,512	917	1,000
Mardin Sanjek	21,101	6,413	489	..
Nomad Kurds' tents	8,260	..	..	..
Nomad Arabs' tents	13,500	..	..	..
Agricultural or sedentary Arabs' tents ..	8,600	..	..	..
Nomad Kurds with Arabs' houses and tents	1,600	..	..	..
	98,090	21,665	1634	2,516
At six souls each	588,540	129,990	9804	15,096

The general average of taxes paid by each house, not including Arabs who pay nothing, is, — for a Moslem house, 147 p. = 1*l.* 6*s.* 8½*d.*, and for a Christian house, 188 p. = 1*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.* annually. The gross revenue of Government is 179,532*l.*, against an expenditure of 43,493*l.*, leaving a net revenue of 136,039*l.* Yet, during the prosperity of the Abbasides, deducting revenues of districts not now included in the Diarbekr Pashalik, the same tracts yielded a net annual revenue, derived principally from tithe on the produce, of 11,750,000 silver dirhems, which at 8*d.* only would give 440,000*l.** And considerably later, in the time of the Zengides, the comparatively small and now worthless district of Sinjar, which, however, included Nisibin, alone gave a larger income than the present Pashalik.

IV.—*The Lake Nor-Zaisan and its Neighbourhood.* By A. ABRAMOF, Member of the Imperial Geographical Society of Russia. Translated from the Russian by JOHN MICHELL, Esq.

Read, January 9, 1865.

LAKE Nor-Zaisan is situated between 47° 40' and 48° 20' N. lat., and between 83° 10' and 84° 50' E. long. (Greenwich), in the province of Yobdi of the Chinese empire. Its south-western borders very closely touch the Siberian frontier, adjoining as they are to the Kokpektinski district of the Semipalatinsk region. This lake spreads itself out in a broad and elevated valley, surrounded by mountain ranges on three of its sides: on its north-eastern or Altaï side, on the north-western or Kolbinsk side, and on the southern or Tarbogatai side. The spurs of the Tarbogatai range, commencing from the mouth of the Upper Irtysh, down along the left bank of

* Ibn Khaldeon, cap. 16, sec. 3 of lib. i. of his 'Prolegomena.'